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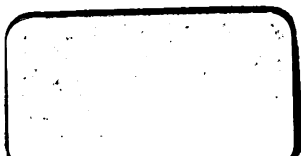
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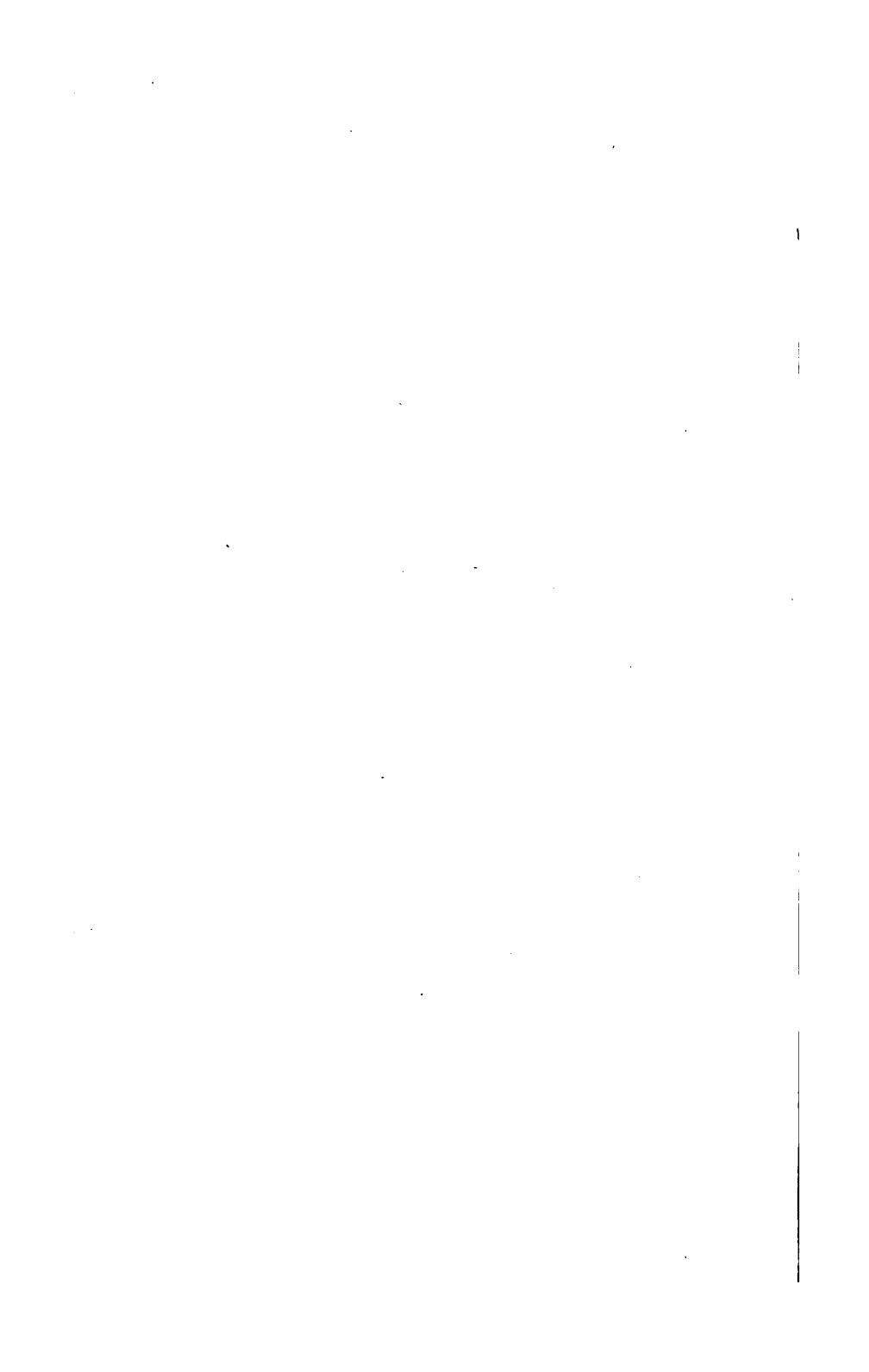








**ESSAYS**  
**FOR FAMILY READING.**



**ESSAYS**  
**FOR FAMILY READING;**  
  
**INTENDED TO**  
  
**COUNTERACT THE ERRORS**  
  
**OF**  
  
**THE "TRACTS FOR THE TIMES."**

**BY THE**  
**REV. JAMES GRAHAM, M.A.,**  
**CURATE OF TEMPLEMORE.**

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TO  
THE HONOURABLE AND RIGHT REVEREND  
RICHARD  
LORD BISHOP OF DERRY AND RAPHOE,

*The following Essays*

ARE, WITH HIS LORDSHIP'S KIND CONSENT,  
HUMBLY AND DUTIFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY HIS LORDSHIP'S  
MOST OBLIGED AND OBEDIENT SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

*September, 1843.*



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## INTRODUCTION.

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**FAMILY** reading, which may easily be rendered sufficiently attractive by borrowing from the stores of general knowledge, will ever be found a source of pure delight and of certain benefit to the sanctified mind ; but before it can prove generally useful, it must be made in some measure agreeable to those who are yet to be won over to an attention to spiritual subjects. Religion is more likely to suffer, especially amongst the young, by being recommended in an injudicious manner, than is commonly supposed ; and there are few who, when they reflect, do not remember some examples in which efforts to promote a respect for godliness, through the medium of perusing serious books in the domestic circle, have entirely failed of success ; and others, in which they have positively been even the means of creating a dislike to it. It should be a primary object with those

whom God in his providence has placed in the responsible station of rulers over their own households, to make the entire management of them at once conformable to Christian principles, and, as far as is possible, conveniently systematic, so as that the inmates may be conscious of something that is pleasing, in whatever may be the particular part which each is to take towards the attainment of a due subordination of the whole to the will of the Lord.

Few things, indeed, are likely to contribute more to the advantage of mankind, than a desire faithfully cherished in the bosom of parents, that, as their families grow up around them, the parental fireside should be the scene of the greatest amount of happiness to all—that from every pursuit and engagement—from every relaxation or amusement abroad, the heart of each should turn with pleasurable feelings to a loved and valued home. It is the plan of our Heavenly Father, that when man finally comes to dwell for ever with him in the light and glory of his perpetual presence, he is to attain the climax of his happiness ; it is a part of that plan, too, that even in the discipline and preparation through which man is to pass here, as making him meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light, the moments of his deepest satisfactions (deep

and settled within, in proportion as there may be pain and trouble from without) should be those in which he is conscious that He is indeed abiding with him, even though at that very time He may be severely chastising him; for He teaches us to know that it is a father's love that comes to us with the rod which gives us pain. The father, after the flesh, who is a king and a priest in his own house, is God's representative in respect of both these offices, as well as in his character of a parent; and, as he loves and honours his Lord, it will be among the highest objects of his ambition to learn, and labour to fulfil, the duty which such a state of life imposes upon him; and in all the anxiety and application which he bestows upon its effectual discharge, he will fervently implore the Giver of all good, and Author of all grace, to grant that, while he administers the needful admixture of encouragement, instruction, and chastisement, he may secure for himself a share in the best affections of all who are committed to him: and how can this be more effectually accomplished than by the solemn care of every one who presides over a household to have a regular, a wholesome, and a pleasing supply of religious instruction, ever ready to be intermingled with the sacred services of prayer, and reading the Scriptures? The divine

comparison which speaks of the communication of spiritual knowledge as the giving of food, was, like all the similitudes employed by our Saviour, happily chosen. Sustenance for the mind and for the soul is to be selected with as much delicacy and exactness of care, as ought to be applied in providing the aliment on which our bodies subsist; it must be kept as free from all extraneous matter—it must be beyond the suspicion of corruption—it must be used in safe but sufficient quantities, and that at frequent intervals—a deficiency will be fatal—too much may do harm. A noble guide drawn from this comparison is thus furnished by an incidental expression of Christ, by which we may be regulated in the distribution of family religious knowledge. A judicious use of it in every Christian house will prove the best preservative of the rising generation from the unceasing efforts which are made to publish what is doubtful or bad. There can be no question but that a taste for religion may be acquired at home, where, however, there is reason to fear, prejudices against it are too often caused, either by its total neglect and violation, or by a sad inconsistency between what is inculcated and what may be practised, or by the defective mode of recommending it already noticed; nor is it (as some might think) any mistrust of

the gracious influence of God's Spirit, to endeavour to lead the mind of young people of rather an advancing age to right religious perceptions, through the medium of matters which occur in their general studies, and which, though not apparently in any way connected with religion, are nevertheless capable of a close application to its principles and purposes. On the contrary, revelation may be materially supported in the opinion of every student, of whatever age or sex, by a proper employment of almost all subjects which are met with even in a course of general education; and it will by no means be found difficult to enable the learner to find pleasure both in a knowledge of the facts accumulated in the memory, which are always interesting as to their order and place in nature, or in metaphysics, and to derive real gratification from an acquaintance with the relation which they all must bear to revealed truth, and the power with which they may assist us to elucidate and confirm it; to overlook this in our desires to make religion agreeable to the youthful mind, would be to deprive ourselves of a legitimate and powerful instrument. There are, indeed, in the present day, more than usual helps in this department of our duty: the general tendency of pulpit instruction has much improved within the memory of every one, so that wherever we have

a preacher now, whatever may be his disposition as to opening out the doctrines of grace in a free and lively way, he is more or less compelled to bring forth better stores than were usually drawn upon hitherto; there is more exposition of Scripture—there is more extended notice of motives and principles; and, certainly, there is a greater degree of attention directed to the subject of family religion. Besides this, the press teems wonderfully with good publications on almost every conceivable subject that can be connected with our eternal interests; and although this may at first sight seem an evil, by causing perplexity in the selection, and even affording opportunity to some to put forth dangerous opinions; yet we cannot but witness in it the surprising proof it makes manifest, that God is in deed and in truth among us—that his Spirit is at work—that he is now imparting a stimulus to the mind of man to go to his fellow-man with the words of life, and publish to a perishing world the glad tidings of salvation. It is remarkable, too, that this is almost peculiar to England, which seems to be a further indication than has already appeared, that she is to be the grand instrument of God's renovation of universal man. We have a greater number of clergymen, too, and of churches, and more frequent opportunities of intercourse

between the people and their ministers, so that all are inexcusable who venture to allow their children to remain without being trained to godliness, until they arrive at an age when, perhaps, the power and the opportunity of leading them to favourable opinions of the Gospel are both gone for ever,—an age when character takes its turn for life, and when youth must be introduced into the world either with the principles of religion expanded and confirmed in their minds, or else be left wholly defenceless from the solicitations of sin, and from the assaults of Infidelity. So serious are the consequences of losing the benefit of that domestic teaching and example which have often, even when least expected, exercised a secret, but at the same time a most powerful influence over the whole worldly career of men. Having stated so much, it may be necessary to give some account of the reasons for adding, by the publication of these Essays, to the number of books for use in family reading, which are admitted to be so abundant and so excellent. It is at once acknowledged, that there is to be found at the present day on sale, in almost every town, a very interesting and valuable supply of works for social perusal — some which have long been known and prized, and others which promise to go down to



posterity, bearing upon them the stamp of Christian approval. But while this is perfectly true, and while, perhaps, nothing was needful to be added to those excellent writings in the way of illustration or enforcement of the views maintained in them at the time when they appeared, it is to be considered that the last ten years have produced a class of writers whose powers have been incessantly and cleverly directed to the accomplishment of a new design, which seems nothing less than to effect an alteration in the Protestant religion, and to assimilate the Church of England to the Church of Rome in many of those particulars of worship and discipline in which the wisdom of our Reformers deemed it safe and wise she should be entirely separated from her, and even in respect of those doctrines, against which Protestant Europe with one undisguised and loud voice protested ; to draw a new line of difference, cautiously diverging as far as possible from the accredited truths embodied in the Confessions of the Protestant Churches, and approaching with no timid steps to take up a position as near to the confines of Romish opinion as is consistent, with some show of opposition to it. There never, probably, appeared in the world a more plausible or a more dangerous departure from the simplicity of the

Gospel than this. It has just enough of legalism and of Romanism to make it acceptable to human nature, and it derives a sufficient degree of sanction, from the learning and general character of its chief promoters, to attract and delude the multitude, who too often think that they are always safe in receiving what a good man teaches. The Essays now presented to the reader are drawn up with the intention of providing matter for introduction into family reading; they will embody the substance of revealed religion, and occasionally weigh its truths in the balance against their counterfeits; but so cautiously, it is hoped, and with so little of the acrimony of a controversial spirit, that while enough is advanced to guard the readers against the errors of the day, there is as little as possible to draw away the mind from pleasing and edifying topics, and nothing to give just cause of offence to any serious inquirer after truth. It will be an endeavour to render the work a satisfactory storehouse of simple and unaffected reasonings upon those subjects which form the grand outlines of the everlasting Gospel of grace and mercy, descending to all their subordinate and dependent topics in turn, according to the limits to which its extent may afford opportunity. There is room, under present circum-

stances, for a large accession to our family religious literature, which ought to be produced with a special eye to this most important subject; and, although there are many reasons why it would be satisfactory to the author's mind not to burthen himself with the anxiety, the responsibility, and the unavoidable pecuniary risk of the present undertaking, he is impelled to it by an overpowering conviction that it is his duty to take some share in the public support of the great Gospel truths maintained by the Reformers of the Church of England; and he is persuaded, that whatever he can accomplish in this way will be most safely and most effectually reached, both as regards a highly intellectual congregation in the principal church of his diocese, to which he has for some years preached, as others who may read his writings, by his opening out the resources which are the fruit of his imperfect studies, and humbly aiding therewith in the interesting, but at the same time somewhat difficult task, as he deems it, of endeavouring to make this addition to the compositions suited for domestic reading which are already in existence.

There is a degree of investigation which, though not amounting to what is usually conveyed by the word "controversy," is demanded by every

subject—the most trivial concern in life calls for it; and why not those which so nearly affect our everlasting salvation? On no matter, indeed, of import, small or great, can any but minds reduced to incapacity, or originally devoid of power, suppose it possible to adopt any decisive or correct line of conduct without it. None could determine what food to eat, what garments to wear, what occupations to follow, without balancing one part of each subject with another, at least in some degree; nor, so long as we are resolved to inquire, and think, and determine for ourselves, what is truth and what is error, will it ever be in our power honestly to avoid that deliberate inquiry into the grounds of what we are to believe, which is worthy of being entitled consideration, but which it would be unjust to brand as polemical. To that deliberate examination, and to that only, of almost every matter of moment connected with the Christian religion, the reader is invited.

In this book the arrangement of the topics introduced is what arose from the author's view of a suitable intermixture of essays upon different branches of the great fundamental truths of the New Testament, with essays upon such subjects as a sin, a fault, a grace, an illustration, a duty, a caution, an error in doctrine, a character,

an example, a principle; sometimes a striking remark—sometimes a notable event—sometimes such topics as knowledge, fear, holiness, happiness, sloth, fervency of spirit, almsgiving, brotherly love, unity, instances of self-denial, fidelity, truthfulness,—sometimes the promises, the types, the prophecies, are taken up,—sometimes the style, the author, the arguments, the peculiarities of one or more of the sacred books; occasionally a miracle, or a saying of our blessed Lord, are brought forward. To divide a portion to all in due season,—a word for the weak, a word for the strong,—a word for all sorts and conditions of men, is the leading aim. It is an object, too (though not intended as one of great prominence), to bring in, either in a separate form, or in connexion with the main subject of an essay which treats of some other matter, reflections calculated to aid in establishing the opening mind in those firm convictions of the truth of revelation which are indispensably necessary to all solid religion, and which are especially needful for young men when first they come into general society, and commence taking part in the affairs of life. This, however, has been limited within rather narrow bounds, lest the power of the enemy might seem to be unduly magnified,

and so, perhaps, a risk be incurred of marking upon the memory objections, whose refutations might possibly be less easily retained than their sometimes imposing influences ; whereas, in fact, if not noticed, they may escape the young man's knowledge, while, if they are ever brought before him, being of a nature more plausible than powerful, we may safely allow them to be left to the ingenuous mind of one who has a tolerable acquaintance with the evidences of Christianity, to meet them at the spur of the moment. The present volume, however, is not to be considered as embracing the whole design, which could only terminate in more ; but it seemed needful to state the plan, in order to show what may be expected should the writer proceed further. This open method is adopted, because it affords the greatest liberty to turn to the right hand and to the left at pleasure ; and to enlarge on any truth, and point out any error, the well-instructed and well-disciplined mind should know ; and to do so, in whatever way the changeful circumstances arising from the peculiarities of the present times may particularly demand or render desirable.

There is but one further topic which appears to demand a place here. The author is well aware both of the power and the inefficiency of

words, but he is far from daring to hope that his yet unpractised hand will disarm the censure of criticism. It has been his endeavour, indeed, not to enfeeble his Essays by an unnecessary affectation of precision, or by the adoption of a peculiar phraseology—to shun whatever might savour of pedantry of any sort, to aim at an intelligible and cheerful style; and to keep pace, as far as may be, with the language of the day. But he is conscious that there must be a natural and an acquired capability for the art of writing; and that to both must be added severe and unremitting application, before its mysteries can be rendered familiar to one who would excel. Having never practised the transcription or imitation of other men's productions, he is sensible, too, that he wants the advantage even of a well-chosen model; and he is not without apprehension, that, humble as his views are of his qualifications for authorship, his humility would be much greater were he aware of all the particulars on which he may be defective; but as his reliance is more upon their commanding claim to a heavenly origin and a Divine authority, possessed by the truths which he chooses as his subjects, than on any sanction which they could derive from the most elaborate and perfect style, he trusts that, while there is a deficiency in no care or labour

which he could apply to present them in a becoming literary dress, he will not suffer in the estimation of the serious reader, if they meet the eye without those ornaments and graces which a higher order of composition would be requisite to bestow.



## KNOWLEDGE.

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Man's intellectual character.—Our place in society determined by knowledge.—True obedience to God impossible without it.—The evil consequences to others from our deficiency in it.—The influence of impartation of it.—The danger of retarding its progress.—The requisite amount of knowledge.

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THE intellectual character of man necessarily places knowledge in the highest class of our attainments. By no single art can we become perfect in knowledge,—by knowledge perfection is reached in everything, so far as we are permitted to have it here. It is by knowledge, and we may almost say, by knowledge only, that man retains the rule over the rest of created beings. If we could conceive intellect bestowed upon the animals which we now call inferior, because they differ from us in not being endowed with reason, we must conclude, that the great physical power which belongs to them, if brought into collision with that measure of natural force which is

allotted to us, in case of a difference of tastes and habits (a difference almost certain to exist), would altogether overwhelm us.

Every man occupies a grade in society, proportioned more or less to the degree of knowledge which he has acquired in his peculiar calling or pursuit, or arising from some share of it enjoyed by his family, or other friends before him, unless, indeed, he have forfeited his claims to respect by misconduct. We have but to look into the various departments of life for their distinguished and cherished names; and on reviewing the lists which contain them, we are almost uniformly enabled to trace the rise of their favoured owners to the gift of superior knowledge. No ignorant man ever yet was, or could be, deemed a truly great man, and certainly, no one who remains in wilful ignorance has any reason to look for distinction either as a citizen of the world, or as a professor of the Christian religion. History transmits to posterity, in every age, a number of examples, which plainly prove that man rises in the scale of eminence and power as he acquires knowledge,—the illustrious warriors of ancient and modern times—the statesmen, the philosophers, the accumulators of wealth by occupations of skill and industry—the men of scientific pursuit who have attained a reputation, owe

their distinction to knowledge, and to the right use of it. It is very true, that numbers of those who have thus been elevated were far from bearing a spotless fame; and that in many instances a high degree of knowledge was employed for purposes that might be classed amongst the lowest grades of human conception. Knowledge is quite as capable of giving refinement in wickedness, as it is qualified to train us to noble and generous actions, and to lead us to the best accomplishments of men and Christians. The same luxuriant soil that sends forth from its bosom the rarest flowers and the richest fruits, to fill the air with sweetness, and store the granaries with plenty, will, in the very midst of these, nurture the plant that poisons; it is in the world at large, as it is in the kingdom of God,—there have always been tares mixed up with the wheat.

There cannot be the lowest degree of proper obedience to God without an accompanying share of knowledge. When our blessed Lord said, "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them," he significantly, though indirectly, declared that blind obedience is valueless: suppose that upon mere rational grounds, just because I reasoned so with myself, but having no better authority for it, I should lay down for my own observance a course

of self-denial, or any other self-imposed duty, in which I concluded that, by being continually engaged, I should be doing acceptable service, am I thereby rendering to God the obedience he requires? Assuredly I am not. The most sincere efforts of my own mind may offend rather than please God; knowledge of a very considerable amount is quite requisite, in order that I may be aware in what manner I ought to obey, and if I am unable to take a step towards a simple act of obedience without it, that fact alone tells us how we are to estimate the saving knowledge which the Gospel of Jesus Christ, through the gracious and life-giving influences of the Holy Spirit, alone can give.

We are not always aware of the amount of evil which may follow from a want of this most inestimable gift; if I have no knowledge on those points which, as a Christian, I am bound and expected to be familiarly acquainted with, I cannot have the consolation of thinking that I am the only sufferer from my own deficiencies. God has ordained that everything which is done towards the formation of character in this scene of mortal existence is, in a great measure, helped out, if it be not wholly wrought, by what we might call impartation. I can scarcely conceive a character which is not more or less

transferred from him who bears it to others who are within the range of his influence, and the more strongly marked the character is, the more decided is the impression likely to be made upon others. A well-informed mind is sure to tell, and tell sometimes very powerfully on others; if they are not quickened by its influence, they are at least instructed, and their materials for thinking, as far as they do think, are very different from what they would be without such an interchange of thought as arises from the contact; but remove that mind, and substitute for it another that only seeks to know and only delights to contemplate the dull common-places of every day life, its insipid and sometimes highly criminal amusements, its prejudices, its scandals, its whisperings, and all the well sought for and well husbanded topics of man's propensity to evil speaking; remove the man of intelligent, well-informed, religious mind from any sphere in which he may have been placed, introduce a successor with such a hopeless intellect, and the steps of deterioration in the minds of others who may look up to him as they did to one who held his position before, will advance at a more rapid rate than the process of improvement did in the same minds antecedently. Knowledge can be imparted even where there are no other means than mere example and social

intercourse, and although we can scarcely say that ignorance can be imparted, yet it is tantamount to the impartation of ignorance either to check the extension of knowledge, or to withhold our influence and our personal efforts from promoting its increase around us. Among the startling truths that shall be developed in the tremendous day of reckoning that is to come upon us all, will be the amount of evil which shall have been caused by that melancholy indifference to sound and sufficient knowledge which has so long reigned predominant in the feelings and habits of man, and which it is to be feared will yet long reign among Christians. In that day many a child will ascribe all the wretchedness of everlasting death to a want of the knowledge which a parent ought to have imparted—then will many a servant feel impelled to plead as an apology, (and although the excuse will not be valid for his pardon, yet it may be effectual for the condemnation of the other,) that, had his master imparted to him an acquaintance with what he ought to have known, he would not then be occupying the place of an enemy of God and an outcast from his Maker's favour; then there will be cast innumerable and well-grounded reproaches by all who are debarred from light and knowledge, upon those who withheld them: nor is it easy to con-

ceive deeper guilt than that which must attach to those who either by settled purpose, or else by apathy and forgetfulness of God, may have indirectly assisted in inflicting the penalties of ignorance on those immortal beings who, had they been supplied with instruction, would have known a crucified Saviour—would have felt and fled from the guilt of sin—would have gladly seized upon the remedy He offers, blessed with pardon, with deliverance, with sanctification, heirs of everlasting life. I may perhaps be inclined almost to feel indignant when such a view is put before me, and I may ask in surprise, Am I my brother's keeper? But the answer of the Bible, the answer of conscience, the answer of charity, in one word, the answer of God is, you are your brother's keeper—you are responsible for the effect produced upon your neighbour's life by your own—you are, above all things, answerable for the principles which either by your words or actions you may impart; the world you live in is a world of example, the race you belong to is a race of imitative beings; your habits, your modes of speech, and, as far as they are ascertained by others, your feelings may become objects of imitation to those who are younger than you are—to those who stand in less elevated grades of society than that in which you take up your position, and

to your equals; nor are you certain that you may not often influence your superiors. Such is the answer which, if I truly investigate this subject, I must feel and know that God gives me—such is the obligation resting upon me—such is the necessity that I should be possessed of Christian knowledge, and that I should use it rightly.

As much information then on sacred subjects as he enjoys a fair opportunity of obtaining, every person is bound to have; the degrees of acquaintance with religious truth to which it is possible to attain, must necessarily be measured by a great variety of circumstances; the quality of our education, the character of our mental powers, our taste for reading, the kind of occupation which has fallen to our lot, if we are not born to an independence, all these are to be considered. He who knows the original languages of the Scriptures, possesses the power of gaining a degree of knowledge clearly beyond the reach of those who understand no tongue but that in which they were born, or some other living language; a higher talent is committed to him, for the use of which he will be called to give an account; while the use of that talent cannot enter into the account which is to be rendered by the other. A person whose time is so completely at his own command that he can go whithersoever he pleases,



and do whatever he may choose, will have to render a strict account for the use of those long periods of his existence which have been spent by others in unavoidable daily labour for the purpose of enabling them to sustain life. He who is endued with unusual powers of mind will be called upon to show, when he comes before the Lord in judgment, that his capabilities have been properly employed in the pursuit, the application, and the communicating of knowledge, to an extent which would not be possible, and which consequently will not be required, in the case of those whose talents are of a minor order. Such are some of the limitations that will be placed upon this matter of possessing knowledge, but to whatever degree it may be circumscribed in any particular instances, it will be absolutely expected in all in a measure much beyond what we accustom ourselves to think; nor would it be safe to attempt to ascertain how much knowledge suffices for salvation: an examination of that question (if it be at all an allowable subject for discussion) has no necessary connexion with the matter before us. I do not think that when the love of God is shed abroad upon our hearts, when the sovereign power of the Holy Spirit comes down to move and to direct them, we are ever found entering into the selfish calculation, how much

knowledge, how much obedience, how much charity, how much character will be barely enough to save me?—indeed such a state of mind as this would indicate might well excite our pity. I think when a true desire for salvation springs up—when once it impels the man to long after some certain hope of heaven, because he has become alarmed for his soul—when futurity assumes its grand and imposing aspect in his eye—when the terrors of those unimaginable torments which are reserved for the unrepentant enemies of God,—for inconceivable they are,—no figures of speech, no efforts of the mind can paint them; when those terrors stare the sinner in the face, and he begins to attribute to the whole subject a reality which the native infidelity of every unawakened heart denies to it, then the consideration is not how little, but how much can I do? What sacrifice is too large to offer, what pain is too exquisite to endure, in order to know the way of salvation, and learn how to love God? The trembling anxious inquirer is willing to compass heaven and earth in order to attain his object; therefore I would say, that it is perhaps never a question entertained in the serious Christian's mind, how much knowledge is barely enough to save me? but what we now consider is only this truth—that knowledge must be cultivated by those who would honour God. The

honour and glory of God, in all inquiries or deliberations such as this, are invariably to be remembered ; it is not merely that we may be saved, but that God may be honoured, that we are to cultivate knowledge, or to practise obedience : it is needless to explain, that properly speaking, it is neither the knowledge nor the obedience that save us—it is the atoning blood of Jesus that alone can take away our sin ; but that adorable Saviour desires to clear the mind of ignorance, as well as to cleanse the conscience and the heart from the guilt of transgression. The knowledge and the obedience are consequences of the illuminating and perfecting presence of the Holy Ghost for which we are to pray, but they are neither the grounds nor the conditions of salvation, which is a free gift of God through Jesus Christ. There are degrees of knowledge to which all, according to their allotments in Providence, should aspire, and for the acquisition of which all possess sufficient facilities. The purpose for which a revelation from heaven was made was to communicate knowledge to all men ; that revelation touches upon an almost infinite number of subjects, every one of which concerns us as moral, intellectual, and accountable beings ; who then is to make a selection and to say, there are some of those topics upon which I shall inform myself, and there are some respect-

ing which I do not intend to inquire? There is not one of them that does not involve some positive duty, and who will venture to affirm that there are grounds upon which he can justify the neglect of any subject, the disregard of which would thus plainly lead to an infringement of the moral law? Who then will classify themselves with the indolent, with the careless, with the unintellectual; or, having any pretensions to the Christian character, will be content to live without a right apprehension of the nature of the Bible—its history, the evidences for it? Who could suffer existence to pass away in such a day of light as this without some just and satisfactory conceptions of sin, repentance, pardon, conversion, justification, sanctification?—until I have given deep consideration, and much prayer, and extended inquiry to faith, hope, patience, afflictions, and judgments, and many such subjects of close personal interest, I will be immersed in darkness respecting daily duties and feelings which ought to be characteristic of me. There are subjects, too, which may be said to be both personal and general subjects, without an acquaintance with which I must be destitute of the power and knowledge requisite to the fulfilment of many obligations which rest on me as a Christian; as, for instance, the scriptural accounts

of the state of the Heathen, and more especially the prophecies which are the continual development of God—the perpetual witnesses to his word.

If I wish to enlarge my own views of the Deity, or to impress upon the mind of another thoughts of magnificence concerning Him, I have but to unfold the roll of prophecy, and there to find materials to work upon. In fine, whether I would enjoy the only true happiness that can be possessed on earth—the happiness derivable from an enlightened conscience, a renewed mind, and a sanctified spirit—or whether I would aspire to that invaluable peace and self-approval which will never fail to follow upon a wise, patient, and resolute opposition to whatever militates against the free and holy Gospel of the Lord Jesus, or whether I would fulfil my duty towards my poor and uninstructed fellow-creatures, or whether I would avoid falling into just contempt among my equals, I must resolve to seek for knowledge.

## CHARITY.

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Exalted nature of Charity.—Charity, a copy of the Divine mind.—Its rejection of everything false in religion.—The spurious charity of the world.—The influence of true charity upon character.—Its superiority to faith and hope.

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CHARITY is a quality of a very exalted nature, and confers great dignity upon its possessors ; it is, however, attainable only when we are led by an overruling principle of attachment to religion,—indeed, in its full sense, we cannot reach charity here. While we are confessedly in an imperfect condition, we cannot be supposed capable of enjoying, in its enlarged extent, that which may have an infinite number of objects towards which it shall be directed, when exercised by us in another and a perfect state of being.

No adequate explanation can be given of charity, for the same reasons which render us incapable of fully possessing it here. It is a

magnificent love giving the genuine complexion to religion,—the possession of it is the brightest proof that God dwells in us. It is his love shed abroad in our hearts. The neglect of charity is evidenced in many forms, and they who exhibit it carry about with them the marks and tokens that they do not belong to the family of God, whatever their professions may be. Every want of sympathy and consideration for others, in things which ought to excite our interest in them—every unkind and unnecessary insinuation—every wilful misinterpretation of the acts, and opinions, and words of others—every instance of coldness in one Christian towards another, when no real cause exists; each, and all of these, are violations of charity, and denote that the Lord's Spirit is not among those who think or do such things.

Charity is a copy of the Divine mind,—to love the thing that God loves—to strengthen that which God institutes—to show disfavour to that which God condemns,—this is charity. There can be no encouragement of different and opposing systems of religion merely on the ground that they are held by men of uncorrupted morals, or even of unquestioned benevolence,—the purest morality, and a very enlarged philanthropy, are

quite consistent with a mind insufficiently informed on spiritual subjects. A man might shudder at the thought of breaking one of the ten commandments himself, who yet would act under such false impressions of Christian charity towards an open sinner, as must compromise the truth and dignity of the Gospel of Christ; and one might be above all suspicion in morals, and unsurpassed in every conventional excellence supposed needful in the world to constitute a good man, and yet be at the same time entirely in the dark as to some of the most important features of that Gospel; and consequently, wholly unacquainted with the nature of true charity. When, therefore, it is proposed to us to give our sanction to anything in religion which does not carry upon its face the stamp of Scripture truth,—though it had all antiquity, and all learning, and all universality to plead for it, we are in the perfect exercise of Christian charity if we refuse. It is not charity to the souls of men—it is not charity to God, to encourage that which wars against the soul, and that which is offensive to God; as all things not contained in Scripture when obtruded upon us for doctrines requisite to salvation are. But the spurious charity of the world will run so far from this as to love and



cherish systems which are instruments for crushing the spiritual reign of Christ in the hearts of men.

But while Christianity imperatively demands that no such erroneous views of charity shall be permitted to go forth with her approval, she provides, at the same time, that there shall be no necessity for the exercise of a harsh spirit. Charity, while she cannot support or countenance what is false or doubtful, will yet cherish a kindly feeling towards those who have departed from the truth; and will never cease to desire fervently their return to a better mind. There are few representations of our holy religion which could commend it more successfully than such a description of one thoroughly imbued with charity, as might be made by those who are competent to the task. Charity moulds the character of man, and adapts him to the social condition in which he finds himself placed, so that he can make every circumstance of life eventually subservient to the great end for which we should all love to live; namely, the promotion of vital godliness,—nor will a morbid idea of charity ever hold him back from a downright and unequivocal expression of a well-timed opinion, through an unwillingness to give offence. His first concern is, to be honest; his next, to be courteous and mild, like his hea-

venly Master. No man of sound principles or dignified mind will ever dare to lower himself by assenting, through mere politeness, to opinions which he does not know to be true, or by palliating conduct of which he cannot approve; and if he be governed by sincerity and real charity, and do not commit himself by acts blameable on his own part, he will generally find in the end that even those who were offended with him will see that they had no just cause, if they are themselves followers of the Lord; and if they are not, he has no concern with their love, or with their hatred,—he has but to bless them, and to pray for them. The very tempers and dispositions of others which seem adverse to a prospect of much advantage from an intercourse with them, can all be made occasions of an exercise of such good feeling and discretion as may be productive of the happiest results. He who is gifted with a prudent mind, and who really wishes to make the various events of life opportunities of exemplifying the excellency of religion, may, if years be allowed him, accomplish wonders in the way of removing prejudices, clearing up mistakes, and preventing feuds and misunderstandings. Charity is the opposite and the antidote of every one of those evil qualities which make people disagreeable to each other. Is there a feeling heart that does not deplore the ruinous

effects, both in public and private life, which have been produced by envy? "Charity envieth not!" Who can tell the multiplied misfortunes which have sprung from a proud, boasting, and overbearing spirit? "Charity vaunteth not itself! is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly!"\* The world is full of instances on a grand and on a minor scale, of the desolating effects of man's cupidity and rapacity. Charity not only does not covet that which belongs to another, but she can so deport herself when occasion requires, that she will not even seek her own! The wrath of man, when permitted to prevail, has often ended in sad calamities,—personal, social, and national; but did charity prevail, this could never be, for "Charity is not easily provoked;" it must be a weighty cause that can move her from her complacency. The natural tendency of man is to suspect the motives of others, and to charge them with intentions and wishes which are ungenerous if not criminal; and man, when unrenewed by grace, and therefore without light in the conscience, will often effect bad purposes, by the imputation of what is dishonourable; but "charity thinketh no evil!" They who are destitute of charity will often take

\* The gender of the word charity is varied in this Essay on the authority of the authorized version of the Bible.

delight in conduct which is known to be displeasing to God, and contrary to the holiness and justice of his commandments ; but charity “rejoiceth not in iniquity,” says the apostle,—a phrase which imports that she sets herself in opposition to iniquity, and mourns when it is successful. Falsehood often meets acceptance in the world, because it opens the door to every form of wickedness, and facilitates the commission of every crime,—it frequently enables men to escape with impunity after having perpetrated the worst acts ; and whatever there is of rebellion against God, or injustice and cruelty towards man, can wear the gilded surface of false representation. Angelic light may be thrown over deeds of darkness, and so God may be insulted, and man may be destroyed, with all the plausibility of that, which although it be iniquitous, can receive by means of falsehood the colouring of what is good ; but charity rejoiceth in the truth ! Whatever may be the consequences, she clings with unshaken fidelity to truth ; in this respect she is faithful in little, as well as faithful in much,—she loves, and she demands the truth in every transaction, great and small,—she glories in the conquests of truth—she assists in its defence and explanation—she is gratified, consoled, and edified, by possessing it. A worldly spirit is impatient of control or

restraint, and bears but badly the inconveniences, contradictions, and oppositions of life; it takes revenge for them, by indulging in morose humours and in unhappy tempers, chafing itself with many self-inflicted sorrows under which health fails, and dignity of character sinks;—but “charity beareth all things!” She has a remedy for every pressure of inconvenience, or even of injustice—she can bear with equanimity whatever arises from the ignorance or the obstinacy of weak-minded brethren, or from unkind and unmerited treatment from those who ought to manifest a better spirit; and even the spoiling of their goods they who have this charity can take joyfully, if they are called upon to do so, for their Master’s sake. Whatever can be borne is borne by charity; it was charity that bore in the person of the Lord Jesus, the insults and the miseries of Calvary! A worldly spirit is often the victim of an unamiable incredulity, and will seldom allow the credit that is due for praiseworthy acts. Jealousy and suspicion are apt to arise, and to warp the mind; but “charity believeth all things!” The first impulse of charity is to believe every representation; the first impulse of a worldly mind is to disbelieve every statement, very much in proportion as it is creditable to the person who is the subject of it; for so deeply are the proofs of

the doctrine of human depravity seated in the hearts of all men, that those who will deny this universal conviction when they are reasoning upon religion, invariably act upon it when they are judging others. This disposition to discredit what is good is accounted for also by recollecting, that true charity can only reside in one melted down to softness by an Almighty power, and giving tokens of cherishing a pure and noble spirit, unconscious of base or unworthy motives, or affections, so that he expects no image to be presented to him in the development of another's mind, but the likeness of his own. In the same way, a mind untrue to rectitude, and uncleansed from corruption, equally looks for its own portraiture in the pencillings of another. Whatever can be believed, or ought to be received as truth, charity will believe,—she will always lean to the side of mercy, and always give the benefit of a doubt,—as far as is consistent with rejoicing in the truth, she believeth all things! To all her other qualities she adds hope,—where no higher objects than the things belonging to time and sense occupy the thoughts of man, his field of expectation is miserably circumscribed; and in proportion to its contraction, will be the calibre of his mind,—narrow, selfish, and ignoble are its calculations—pitiable its prospects; it can picture to itself

little indeed of that glorious expanse of promise which is held out to the eye of charity. Charity delights in pleasant pictures,—she makes the present happy by her smiles and beneficence, and often awakens up the heart of the afflicted to a participation in cheerful thoughts and feelings; she finds in the contemplation of the future, blessedness for herself, and expectations as consolatory as she can for others. What an enviable possession charity is? Who would not desire to share the honour and the pleasure which belong to those with whom she takes up her abode,—patience, kindness, complacency, at the happiness and prosperity of others,—humility, blandness of temper, pure and pleasing thoughts, truth, faith, hope, and forgiveness, are all blended in her character.

I need scarcely observe here that charity is more than to speak with all the eloquence that men or angels could imagine or employ—that it surpasses all the excellence of knowledge, and all the bounds of faith—that it is more than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices, even more than to give all your goods to feed the poor, or to give your body to be burned. When it has once taken possession of the heart in its full extent, a new principle is infused, our tendencies are changed, new capabilities arise, objects not contemplated before are placed within

our reach, and many of those upon which our powers were once centered are given up. It confers on the man an independence, and a range of thought, of sensibility, of action, of hope, of fear, of confidence, of resolution, which are wholly new to him; it blots out the confined circle which he once drew around him, beyond which he deemed it impossible or imprudent to employ the faculties or the means of usefulness which he possessed. He now can enter into enlarged views to which he was hitherto an utter stranger, and he can feel with a pity, which he never knew in former times, for the sufferings and wants of his fellow-men. He can now imagine himself removed as it were from this globe of which he is an inhabitant, to behold it from a distance revolving upon its axis, and as each successive portion of it meets his eye, he can feel and say, upon that sphere are countless multitudes of human beings, all hastening to the dust from which they came, all descended from the first pair, all inheriting from them the consequences of the early ruin of our race, all made for eternal destinies of life or death, or the endurance of anguish not to cease, or of endless glory that may be allotted in judgment! there they are, as they have ever been since the fall, coming upon the earth and retreating from it in rapid succession; to every one his own time is given; to some,



through grace; invaluable opportunities to improve themselves and to pass the cup of privilege to others; it is his trust that many do so, and that more will yet be inclined to follow the example, that faith and hope and love may go forth, that God may be glorified, that sinners may be saved, that heaven, where charity will behold her grand achievements, may rejoice in multiplied triumphs over sin, the world, and the devil! And as he thus contemplates the condition of humanity, and turns inward upon himself to survey the change that has taken place there, he does not shrink from an effort to impart to others, as far as human instrumentality can be employed to such an end, the blessings by which he has obtained a clean heart and a right spirit; and though he may not possess wealth, or honour, or station in the world, to enable him to entertain such schemes of enlarged benevolence as his heart would gladly enter into, nay, even though he may possess neither silver nor gold, though he cannot send out a missionary, a Bible, or even a tract, still he knows that "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much," and he feels that an act of love, originating in a holy faith, stimulated by a comprehensive hope, and making its way to heaven in his devotions, though it be but the heart's desire, may, in the inscrutable

designs of Him who commanded his followers to pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers, call out some messenger of glad tidings to scatter the seed of eternal life, of which children yet unborn are to reap the benefit.

St. Paul has stated that charity is greater than faith and hope. When we read in the Scriptures that God is love, love is presented to us in a view in which we cannot have faith or hope brought before us—it is identified with the nature and character of God; whereas there is nothing in faith or hope that can be so applied to Him; faith and hope are accommodated to the state of man, they imply dependance, uncertainty, and ignorance, all which are entirely at variance with every idea which we are accustomed to entertain of God; to apply faith or hope to God as privileges which He could exercise, would be bringing him down to the condition of his own creatures, but to apply love to man is in some degree to make him a partaker of the Divine nature, so that he can approach the excellency before which he shall dwell as a redeemed creature, and thereby in some measure be made “perfect even as He is perfect,” whose throne is heaven.

There are no discoverable limits to charity as to the numbers to whom it is confined, but a limit distinctly and immediately recognisable is assigned in this respect to faith and hope. If I believe in

the Lord Jesus Christ, my faith in Him can only be instrumental to my own salvation ; if I entertain a well-assured hope, based upon the ground of a lively practical faith, that hope can only impart confidence to myself ; but there is no such limitation of my charity, nay, rather, the more my brother is destitute of faith, and the more he is deficient in hope, so much the more am I called upon to exercise my charity towards him in whatever manner I can hope to win him to the way of life. Neither can we suppose that in respect of duration charity has any bounds, and this we could not say is true of faith, nor could we affirm it of hope ; faith is the evidence of things not now seen, but things that shall be seen, and when they become visible, the testimony of faith shall be no longer needful ; faith is our polar star through time, but sight shall be our assurance in eternity ; hope is the anticipation of things that are to be rejoiced in, anticipation is inevitably destroyed in possession ; but though faith shall be no longer needful, or hope possible, charity never faileth ! Love, if it be kindled into a true flame on earth, will burn purer and brighter than it ever did or ever can here below.

The conclusion of this Essay was written in the year 1832, and appeared in a former publication of the author's, a Sermon on faith, hope, and charity.

## THE SCRIPTURES.

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The Scriptures intended for popular use.—The struggle for an open Bible in England.—A parallel between the efforts to put down Christianity by the death of Christ, and those to destroy its vitality by the suppression of the Word.—The bulwarks of defence raised by the Reformers and their successors.—Attacks among ourselves upon the free use of Scripture.

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THE evidences that the sacred Scriptures were intended for popular use are as abundant as the proof that the reason of all men is to be subjected to that of a few is difficult. It was the popular use of the Bible that made England the greatest nation in the world; her temporal prosperity grew as her spiritual condition advanced, and she has been equally the dispenser of the laws of God and man to an admiring world.\* The struggle for an open Bible in England at the time of the

\* The views of the Rev. George Croly on this subject are frequently very striking and instructive, more particularly in his assignment of the seven trumpets and seven vials.

Reformation was marked with evident tokens of the Divine blessing upon those who maintained it; they were men of God, and like the first followers of our blessed Lord, had many a difficulty and many a danger to contend with; and besides what they might justly have apprehended from others, we see them preparing their spirits to encounter, not only the coldness, but the opposition of their brethren; they had to experience also that a man's foes for conscience sake may be those of his own household; numbers of them were stripped of their property and their honours, and not a few were deprived of life because of their Master's Word. England, however became at last unanimous on this subject, but not until the Reformers had removed an obstacle which presented a serious impediment; although there had been a Saxon version by Bede, and a subsequent translation into English, yet what between the errors of Romanism and the obsolete style, they were useless, and the Reformers had to produce the Bible in the language of the people before the setting forth of the true doctrine could be successfully attempted. This is not the place for a history of the laborious undertaking of bringing the translation of the Bible into English to completion, a just narration of which would require a review of many characters, scenes, and

events of painful and intense interest, from the first efforts of the noble Wickliffe\* to the successful accomplishment of that glorious work by Miles Coverdale,† at an interval of almost two hundred years from Wickliffe; nor is it intended to give any account of the memorable battle so long contested and at last so happily concluded, a battle for the freedom of God's Word, wherein baseness, treachery, infidelity, superstition, hatred of spiritual religion, love of the world, and miserable self-righteousness, all found themselves, though often encouraged by authority, station, wealth, and every influence which those who are evil

\* Camden's account of Richard Ralph, Archbishop of Armagh, who was born at Dundalk, in Ireland, compared with Mosheim, will show that Wickliffe borrowed some of his light and courage from that prelate, who when Wickliffe was but nine years old (in 1333), was at the head of the fellows of Oxford; in 1356 Ralph preached in London against the Monastic system; in the year of his death, 1360, Wickliffe took up the same subject at Oxford, for which he was expelled from the Wardenship of that University, after which he translated the Scriptures.—*See Camden, Ware, and Mosheim.*

† Coverdale was assisted by other English exiles at Geneva, and it is believed that he was also indebted for material aid to the great Scottish Reformer, in the production of his Bible, which, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, passed through thirty editions, mostly from the hands of the Royal printers, and laid the foundation for the wonderful and happy changes which followed all over England.—*Life of Knox.*

in the world can command,\* utterly foiled through the power given by God to His servants to promote the cause of His truth. The chief object of this Essay is to lead to the contemplation of some of the evidence that the sacred writings were intended for general use. The hope of the Jew who hated the Gospel of Christ was, that by putting him to death the progress of Christianity would at once be checked, but the very means adopted to achieve the desired end eventuated in the accomplishment of its opposite—the death of the Lord Jesus was the life, not the extinction of his Gospel; above all other events that could have taken place it disappointed the Jew; he was confuted out of his own cherished statutes and by the acts of his own hands, for the murder of the Lord was the fulfilment of the prophecies of the Old Testament which pointed to the Messiah, and so when the corruptions of the Romish Church began to extend, branching themselves out, first in things not recommended in the Scriptures, then in things not suited to the genius and spirit of them, and at last in things plainly contrary to them, the hope of her ritualists, who would substitute their own inventions for the holy and life-giving doctrines of Christ, was, that, by putting the light of the Gospel under a bushel, the doc-

\* Lives of the Reformers *passim*, but especially in Cranmer's.

trines of grace might for ever be forgotten. To accomplish this, learning was in a great degree suppressed, or else, as far as might be, restrained to the clergy, although it was even with them by no means a required qualification, for many men held the dignified stations in the Church then who were almost, if not altogether, illiterate; but as it happened in the case of the Jew and our Lord, it was also in the instance of Rome and the Scriptures; Christ indeed was laid in the tomb, and the chief priests set a seal and a guard upon its entrance, but no power of man—no power of death—could hold him there; nay, the Prince of this world had no strength to keep possession of Him, and He rose by the mighty power of God, and proved by a high and holy demonstration to the praise and glory of His name for ever, and to the perpetual admiration of a redeemed race, even by His ascension and the sending down of His Spirit, that He alone could be the way, the truth, and the life. The Scriptures, too, were in like manner committed to darkness, and in the grave of languages unknown except to a few, it was the purpose that they should lose their life and power, for life and power are qualities of that Word,—it is its office to quicken, and it is the power of God unto salvation, and is able, as we are told, “to save our souls;” and there was



danger, too, that even the learned themselves should utterly despise them. An accomplished Cardinal, who saw no beauty in his Lord, or in his Word, that he might desire them, is related to have said, that once indeed he had read the Bible; but if he were to do so again, he should spoil his taste and skill in Latin. Alluding to this, an admirable writer\* observes, that "Amongst those great orators (as they thought themselves) who lived in the same age and country that he did, the complaint was ordinary, that the reading of the Bible untaught them the purity of the Roman language, and corrupted their Ciceronian style." Such was the grave of oblivion and contempt to which for fifteen hundred years the Roman Church was willing to consign the glorious Word of God. The learned spurned it, the unlearned could not know its contents, and so one fearful Cimmerian gloom overspreading Christendom, the people were taught to look for salvation as if God had never intended that there should be light and knowledge in the world, but that man should be left at liberty to devise for his fellow-man, as ignorance, prejudice, caprice, or cupidity, might suggest, the forms and ceremonies of religion. But as the Saviour burst the cerements of the

\* The Honourable Robert Boyle, in his "Considerations touching the Style of the Holy Scriptures."

tomb, and arose to display life in a world dead in trespasses and sins, God did not suffer man to be successful in extinguishing the truth. He brings light out of darkness, and good out of evil; and in proportion to the length of time during which the heavenly flame of truth which burns in every page of Scripture was held in disguise or secrecy, it afterwards broke forth with a lustre to be repelled by no human device; coming with such effect, that in a short time the whole people of England, with scarcely a fraction of sufficient amount to be called an exception, separated from the Roman See, which had thus proved itself the corrupter and concealer of God's Word. The very reverse of the expected consequences followed from the suppression of the Bible. The Holy Spirit seemed as it were for a time quenched by this tremendous revolt of man against the God of the Scriptures; but it is when the powers of darkness have arrived at their greatest height, and when the hope of man against the truth of God is about to grasp as a substance its object, that it is ordained that that expected substance shall be found to be but a shadow. It is when the enemy expects to come in as a flood that the Spirit of the Lord is prepared "to lift up a standard against him." It is true, that as the Lord of glory was committed to the tomb for a

time, so for a space his holy and heavenly Word was confined within the walls of unfrequented libraries, and degraded by being withheld from mankind in the embraces of a spurious language; but it was the purpose of Heaven to frustrate a design in which we can discover little to enable us to indulge the charitable feeling towards its authors, that they were free from a heartfelt hatred to the Gospel. The brightness of that light thus perfectly kindled in England, has never since diminished—nay, it has increased many fold; for now it shines not only in our own, but in another hemisphere, and in every part of the world its glory may be seen. It ought, perhaps, to be stated here, in order to avoid the imputation of a want of candour, that all along this line of darkness there were in existence many versions of the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament, in a variety of languages; and that there had not been wanting writers, even in the Church of Rome herself, who had undertaken to defend the Christian religion scholastically, against the assaults of Infidelity. It is quite true, that in the early ages of the Church, and more particularly in the second century, as recorded by ecclesiastical historians, great zeal was manifested in the production of the Bible in many tongues; copies of the versions, and sometimes original

manuscripts, were handed down ; from these, benefits were derived to countries since overrun with Mahometanism, in which the Christian religion, in a few instances, only struggles for existence, and in others, has almost or altogether disappeared, there never having been a sufficient agency applied to effect their general instruction in the Gospel. The Gallican Church and Christians in other places, not under the power of the See of Rome, had succeeded in obtaining the Scriptures in their own language ; but so far as authority could prevail, both in England and in every country, it was exercised to prevent the translation of that blessed book. The conduct of the Council of Trent in conferring its praises and sanction upon the Vulgate, some writers have not hesitated to assert, was adopted with the express intention of bringing the Scriptures into contempt and disrepute, while some of those who appeared as the advocates of religion, and the shepherds of Christ's flock, proceeded so far in their hostility to the propagation of his Word, as to affirm, in full accordance with the uniform system and purpose of their Church, that the laws and commands of spiritual pastors, and their instructions in matters of religion, were more authoritative than anything in the Scriptures

themselves.\* It is scarcely to be apprehended that we shall ever again be brought back into such a fearful state of apostasy from God ; and it rejoices the Christian's heart to contemplate the bulwarks which learning, industry, faith, constancy, and Christian light and knowledge have, since the Reformation, raised up in Protestant Europe, but more especially in England, to defend, elucidate, and set forth, in demonstration and in power, the life-giving essentials of the Gospel of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, her great Reformers standing out conspicuously in the breastworks. But the restless spirit of man is ever on the search for some new trouble for the people of God ; and it is a source of poignant grief to know, that in the bosom of that Church which those honoured servants of their Divine Master lived and died to purify, to cherish, and to exalt, some have sprung up to drag them to judgment in the nineteenth century, and to lay to their charge the adoption of error in those points in which we and our forefathers have ever been accustomed to prize them most ; and more especially in this matter of the Scriptures, upon which so much depends, so that now we are told that these illustrious men, who attested by the shedding of

\* Mosheim.

their blood, the principles which they transmitted to us in their almost inspired writings, principles and writings which England and her spiritual children have so long venerated, are to be condemned in many of the most important particulars in which they have fed us by their doctrine, and taught us to protest against additions to the Word of God, and corruptions of it. To meet an evil so serious will need no common power; it is a work, at once both delicate and inevitable, and requiring many hands. If we are at all in earnest in what we hold or teach, we must engage in it; but unless we take every step with extreme caution, and with sincere and constant prayer to God, we are in danger of damaging the cause which we would serve. If it would be done effectually, we must all contribute our part; and, so in whatever station we may be, we cannot shrink from being faithful,—and yet we must take good heed not to overstep what perfectly becomes us, what is entirely justifiable on our own part, what the lovers and friends of the Gospel have a right to expect from us, and what, when done, they will have no cause not to approve in us. In the fear of God, and in sympathy for souls—in zeal for Christ's kingdom here below—in recollection of the spirits of just men made perfect, who are above—in defence of whatsoever things are lovely, and of good report,—there is no honourable escape from this duty. No one

can fulfil what his obligations impose on him if he fall back from an explicit avowal of his opinions, and from an unequivocal approbation of those who love the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth, and defend it with a decided, a scriptural, and a wise spirit. He who is unwilling to lend a hand to lay the axe to the root of the tree, not only giving no connivance or permission to promote its permanence or stability, but seeing that no available means have been left unemployed to secure repeated and well-directed strokes being judiciously brought into play against it, must be prepared to answer at the bar of public opinion for a hesitation so fraught with peril to the spiritual interests of every creature to whom he can, directly or indirectly, give, or not give, as he pleases, the supplies of spiritual bread. Our congregations look to their clergy, but more especially they look to our chief ministers to see that the company of the preachers shall be sufficient, and that the quality of their teaching shall be sound. The time is come when there can be no parleying on what concerns salvation; it is now needful that the Scriptures be drawn out and opened more and more to the people, that they may not be suffered to fall into Pharisaical errors because they do not know them. It is now absolutely essential to the well-being of the

Gospel among us that we should lay down first principles, and show how we are to look for the written Word as a guide; and how we are to be careful to avoid receiving what cannot claim its unequivocal support. The people are now expecting from their teachers full satisfaction on all such matters, and they have a perfect right to make its possession an object of congregational desire. It will be needful to bring the whole subject into investigation, so that every part of the body of truth may be kept before the mind, and no portion of the error suffered to remain undetected. An assault has been made upon the principle of freely resorting to the Bible, and we are blamed for claiming the exercise of our private judgment as we conceive we have a right to employ it; it must be ascertained whether, in meekness of spirit, in due and chastened subordination to the gracious Author of the Word as our teacher by the Holy Ghost, in earnest supplication for grace so as to derive wisdom from his councils, we may or may not use our rational powers in weighing the statements of the Scriptures, and thus receiving them as we would any similar appeals or addresses which might be made to us through the medium of statements of facts or of letters written to us. The whole history and tenor of Scripture show that it is a record for the use of mankind at large,



and if for any portion of the race of man more than another, certainly for our admonition, without exception, upon whom the ends of the world have come. These latter days are days of especial interest in the fulfilment of the Scriptures; they are days pregnant with events which must elucidate the prophetic parts of the Bible, and they are times when no man can have a dignified place among enlightened and well-informed Christians without being deeply conversant with that peculiar species of knowledge which is the result of a combination of acquirement in sacred and profane history, and literature generally, but more particularly the former. Without this there must be a grievous decay in Christianity, which was destined to flourish by the faithful and diligent examination of the Word. We have indeed no novel doctrines to learn from the Scriptures, there are however new facts to be understood only by them; but unless there be a perpetually growing application of their contents to the condition of mankind we must be in a state of ignorance of some of the very things that concern us most. Events may take place of the deepest interest to Christians, without their being aware of them; if they have not learned to exercise a judgment upon the Scriptures so as to discern the signs of the times by the things which are

happening upon the earth, serious injury to the best interests of religion may be produced. On what grounds, then, are we not to have the holy Scriptures perpetually in our hands, and in our minds? Are we not to search for their doctrines as for hidden treasures? Are we not to analyse their predictions that we may know our duty in that state of life, and in those times into which it has pleased God to call us? It requires some hardihood to reply to either of these in the negative. Most certainly we are; nor is there any principle in the Church, from among whose sons the writers of the "Tracts for the Times" have arisen, suppressive of that freedom of inquiry and of judgment which is the birthright of every true Christian, and which they have deemed it wise to oppose, as must be easily apparent upon an examination of that exposition of the views of the Reformers, upon whom so great an indignity is put, which is handed down to us in the Liturgy, the Articles of religion, and the Homilies of the Church of England; these standards do not favour the modern notions of old errors, either in the sense in which they were intended when compiled, or in that which they present in the literal and plain signification of their language. But here a few simple references to our great instructor, the Bible itself, were chiefly intended.

When we reflect upon the manner in which revelation began at first to be committed to writing, what are we to think? Did not God write the commandments with his own finger, that every eye might trace for itself the holy statutes? If I consider what the Scripture announces in the concluding book of the New Testament, to what decision am I led but this; that, in common with every fellow-creature, I have an equal right to the fulness of the plighted blessing—blessing for him that reads, blessing for him that hears, and blessing for him that keeps the things that are written therein. And if I travel over the intermediate ground, and only place my foot here and there upon a few of the many stepping-stones which stand as ready foundations for the argument upon which I am now but barely touching, I must entirely surrender my reason, and believe that God never intended mankind to be instructed by the plainest words which he has spoken to us, but rather that it is a duty to treat them as if we were dealing in the interpretation of dreams, and to explain them to mean the opposite of what they express in words. What are we to do with the command to the Jews to teach the statutes to their children? What are we to do with the seventy-eighth and the hundred and nineteenth Psalms? If no

judgment is to be exercised upon them why command them to be taught to the children? If no decision of our own as to the way in which they are to rule the conscience, amend the heart, and operate in the life is to be permitted, why require the parent to hand down to the child from generation to generation an exposition of their meaning? If we are to have no opinion upon them that we can call our own, how could they console us by being our songs in the house of our pilgrimage, or why state those various personal applications of them to be made which are suggested to us, particularly in the last-mentioned psalm? How are we to fulfil the duty of bringing teachers, speakers, writers, all men, and all opinions, to the law and to the testimony? What are we to gather from making the vision of the prophet so plain that he who ran could, at the same time, read? In what way are we to employ the Scriptures for our learning? In what manner are we to have comfort in them, unless we are at liberty to make our own application of them? If this point be given up, what suitable means have we for the improvement of mankind? for giving our fellow-creatures a knowledge of God—for keeping them right on earth, that they may be happy in heaven? Are they to be left to the perils arising from an insufficient,

an indolent, or an unfaithful ministry, to which they may be exposed anywhere, or even to those of an ungodly or a wicked minister, or those which may arise from having no minister at all? How are we to provide for the instruction of those, who are emigrating to foreign lands uncertain of finding an established Church? At home or abroad, well or ill provided with religious teachers, where will instruction be had for the leisure hours of the people,—proper vehicles by which it may be conveyed from parents to their children? Will the solitary lessons of their clergy, however well qualified, supply this? If not, you must have books; if you have books, they must, to have authority, be grounded on the Scriptures; and how can this be shown without giving the Scriptures fully and freely along with them, and at the same time allowing the use of the powers God has given man to ascertain this point, uncontrolled by any restraint but what is clearly defined in the Scriptures themselves: and when I look into the first use that was made of the New Testament, I can scarcely have a doubt upon my mind that this was the very thing intended by them. The Gospels and the Acts are simple narratives of all that Jesus began to do and to teach until the day in which he was taken up, and of the proceedings of the apostles,—and as such, are incul-

cated, and surely were intended not to inform the apostles and teachers, but those to whom they were sent, and whom they taught. Almost all they relate was transacted in public, or addressed to very large multitudes. Many of our Lord's conversations with his immediate followers being addressed to them in the hearing of the people; nor is there sufficient evidence for leading us to a belief that these Scriptures, or the other parts of the New Testament, were then, or at any future time, to be withheld either from the perusal or from the judgment of the people at large. Luke wrote the Acts to a layman. Paul writes to all that are in Rome, to the Church of God at Corinth, all that in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord—to all the saints that are in Achaia—to the Churches of Galatia—to all the saints in Christ Jesus, which are at Philippi, and along with them, to the bishops and deacons, to the saints and faithful brethren which are at Colosse—to the Church of the Thessalonians, to be read to all the holy brethren—to the Church in Philemon's house; and, that it was to lay persons the Epistle to the Hebrews was written, is evident from the admonition to obey them that had the rule over them, and to submit themselves,—for they watched for their souls: these are all the Epistles of Paul, except those to

Timothy and Titus. In the First Epistle to Timothy, we find such plain directions for the conduct of servants, as were evidently intended to be addressed to their judgment; and in the Second, wherein Timothy's knowledge of the Scriptures when a child is highly commended, not only is no mention made of any restrictions placed upon his mind in imbibing their contents, but there is an express statement, "that they are able to make wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus." That addressed to Titus is the only one from which a positive proof cannot be produced that these writings were intended for free use by others besides the ministers of religion, while, certainly, it affords no evidence that they were on any pretence, or in any degree, to be withheld from the laity, if the plain meaning is to be attached to the closing words, "Grace be with you all." The remainder of the New Testament consists of the Epistles of James, Peter, John, Jude, and the Book of Revelation. James writes to the twelve tribes scattered abroad. Peter's First Epistle is addressed to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,—many of whom had probably no pastors at the time whose ministry they could enjoy. In the fourth and fifth chapters of this book we find an example of the mixed

character of the teaching of the New Testament. The sacred Word itself, the discourses of our Lord, and the personal instructions of the inspired writers and of the preachers they describe were intended both for ministers and for people. Peter's second letter is, without exception, to them that have obtained the like precious faith with us. John writes to children, fathers, and young men,—to the elect lady and her children; and to the well-beloved Gaius, to whom he writes as would an elder of the flock whom he loves in the truth. Jude, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Christ Jesus, and called. The Revelation has been already noticed. What then can be more evident than that the ever blessed Word of God was written for the young, and for the old, for the people, as well as for the priests; for all sorts and conditions of men; in every age. I shall close this essay by quoting the testimony of two chief ministers of the Church of England:—"A revival of religion must spring from a revival of the authority of the Bible—a revival of the unlimited sovereignty of the INSPIRED BOOK in overruling all the errors of men, in swaying every heart, in governing and curbing every imagination, in deciding every controversy—in being itself the element and matter of all our instructions, in public and private. The Divine medicine must not be



adulterated and weakened by the admixtures of man, or our maladies will never be cured. The cup of salvation must not be corrupted with 'the wine of Sodom, and the grapes of Gomorrha,' or the wounds of men will remain unhealed. We must return to our Bibles."\* "This law teaches man sufficiently, as well what he is bound to do with God, as with the princes of the world. Nothing can be desired necessary for man but is prescribed in this law; of what degree, vocation, or calling, soever he be, his duty is shown unto him in the Scripture; and in this it differs from man's laws, because it is absolute, perfect, and never to be changed, nothing to be added to it, or taken from it: and the Church of Christ, the more it was and is burdened with man's laws, the farther it is from the true and sincere verity of God's Word. The more man presumes and takes authority to interpret the Scripture after his own brain, and subtle wit, and not as the verity of the text requires, the more he dishonours the Scripture, and blasphemes God the author thereof."†

\* The Right Reverend D. Wilson, Bishop of Calcutta.  
—Introduction to Baxter's Reformed Pastor, p. 46.

† Hooper, Bishop of Gloucester, chapter "On the authority of the Word of God," in his "Declaration of Christ, and his Office." Hooper was burned to death in the year 1555,

by order of Queen Mary, in the streets of Gloucester, in the presence of seven thousand persons on the market-day. When he saw them, "Alas!" said he, "Why are these people assembled and come together? Peradventure, they think to hear something of me now, as they have in times past; but, alas! speech is prohibited me! Notwithstanding, the cause of my death is well-known unto them." When I was appointed pastor I preached unto them the true and sincere doctrine out of the Word of God. Because I will not now account the same to be heresy and untruth, this kind of death is prepared for me."

## THE GREATNESS OF FAITH.

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The woman of Canaan.—The character of her faith.—Its exercise for the edification of others, and the repeated discouragements of her petition.—Its final and honourable triumph.

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BE it unto thee even as thou wilt! was the gracious answer of our Lord Jesus Christ, to the poor woman of Canaan, who came from a scene of domestic wretchedness to seek relief from Him. How easily, and yet how strongly he is touched with a feeling for us in our infirmities! The tears he dropped into the grave of Lazarus, are proof enough. The Lord knoweth what we are made of,—he remembers that we are but dust. He whose Spirit moved the apostle to indite as a perpetual injunction on all his people, in their earthly pilgrimage, “that they should weep with them that weep,” saw her sorrow,—he well knew how cheerless her home was; and he did not withhold his power to raise the voice of joy and glad-

ness there. He said, "Be it unto thee even as thou wilt!" But while our blessed Saviour was thus ready to dry up the tears of a mourning mother, he did not forget that he had a great public duty to perform, he therefore makes the circumstance of this new appeal a means of engaging the attention of the multitude who watched his actions, and hung upon his lips, and so produces accession of strength to the Gospel cause. He resolves to try her faith before many.

I do not delay to enter into any formal disquisition as to the kind of faith which thus met with our Lord's distinguishing approbation,—it is enough for me to know from the whole transaction what I learn from it generally of faith in God, whatever point in God's character, or whatever branch of his power and goodness it may have reference to; nor am I in any way frustrated in this use of the narrative I now select as my subject, by the suggestion, to which I take no exception, that probably the faith of the Syrophœnician woman, as St. Mark calls her, amounted to no more than a conviction that Jesus was a Divine person, and so possessed of the means of conferring upon her any or all of those things which might reasonably be expected from the Supreme Being,—indeed, the more cautiously the extent of her faith is stated, the more powerful,

I think, will be the argument ultimately to be derived from it, in favour of the doctrines of grace, mercy, and compassion, which are the golden thread we lay hold of to lead us through the mysterious paths of Divine revelation, where all is labyrinth until we have them in our view; for the less we make of this woman's faith the more clearly can we establish upon it an argument, which is the stronger in proportion to the smallness of the foundation on which that out of which it springs is admitted to rest.

God is always more or less trying our faith,—the whole of man's terrestrial existence being admitted, I believe, by all Christians, to be a scene of probation; and sometimes there are more striking and especial instances of this trial than at others. Sometimes God tries our faith in the beginning—sometimes he puts it to a test in the end. His acts of providence and grace towards us are done in wisdom and in holiness; but we can have no clue at present to enable us to discover on what principle he chooses his time for them,—this is as great a secret as the period of judgment.

But of course it is understood by every one, that although we are on a trial of our faith our Lord can have no doubt as to its existence. He tries our faith, that we ourselves may have con-

fidence in ourselves,—that others may see its power and its influence on us,—that by continual exercise it may grow stronger and stronger. In the present instance, He seems to have tried the faith of His suppliant for the purpose of edifying those who witnessed such an exhibition of His power as He displayed in giving to her its reward, and no doubt in order too, that He might imprint upon the mind of the woman a valuable lesson. She was well aware of the history of Jesus ; although she was not a Jewess, she recognised Him as the Son of David, and she called Him Lord. The circumstance of her addressing Him in these words is a proof that she must have felt conscious of labouring under a disadvantage in approaching Him, as a Gentile, to petition His favour ; she belonged to those people who had, by their wickedness, drawn upon themselves the vengeance of God, and who were rooted out to make room for the tribes of Israel : she therefore thought herself unlikely to succeed with Jesus. But when we are placed in desperate circumstances, we do not always reason with the precision of philosophy, nor do we feel bound very scrupulously to observe the abstract theories of demeanour, or even the plain forms and ceremonials of life, at such a time ; if there could be space for them in the memory, they would scarcely seem suitable. It

was so with the woman of Canaan. Her daughter, whom she loved tenderly, and had no doubt brought up affectionately—the hope, perhaps, of her declining years, the joy of her home—was grievously tormented; and she knew from facts at least that Jesus was able to cure her: a rejection would not leave her in a worse condition, a favourable reception, though rendered probable in her mind by nothing in her condition except its misery, was debarred by no impossibility. This was not a time for very nicely balancing conjectures; this was not a time for taking heed to fears or embarrassments that might be groundless, and that might themselves prove, rather than anything either in Christ or in her own state, the very means of her disappointment. The visit of Jesus to Tyre and Sidon was unexpected, and might never be repeated; this, then, was a time for decision, and so the woman makes up her mind; she utters a cry for mercy—she comes in the true feeling of a petitioner at the throne of grace. A cry for mercy implies a great deal, it is an admission that I deserve nothing; yea, it is an admission not only that I deserve nothing, but that I might be subjected to some rigorous rule of punishment; a hearty cry for mercy is a complete submission to the Heavenly will, and evidences a thorough conquest of the pride

of the natural heart; and yet our gracious Lord seems cold when this cry pierces His ear, "He answered not a word." Now what more likely to deter her from a second approach than this? Not a single word will Jesus speak. It would not be possible to suppose, with any degree of candour, that He did not hear her; He knew the very movement of the heart that dictated her petition, and therefore He knew when the entreaty was uttered. But still He answered not a word: and yet there was a vivid picture in the Saviour's mind of all that passed in the poor woman's house, still, however, he answers not; and notwithstanding all these adverse appearances, we know, from the sequel, that He had resolved to answer favourably. Had this woman possessed no faith, she would now have concluded that there was no ground for hope, and she would have gone away disconcerted and broken-hearted. It is even possible, that with some belief in the divine character of Jesus she might have felt herself at this moment entirely unfit to obtain her wishes, and so have gone away; but we are to remember that it is a part of faith, and a very eminent part of it, to understand humility; humility is genuine, and has its foundation in true faith, when it makes us look upon ourselves as vile earth and miserable



sinners, and gives to our prayers a force and perseverance borrowing their proportions from that faith; but the humility which keeps us away from God, which prevents us from praying, is the suggestion of Satan, and cannot well be conceived to co-exist with true faith. It is for this reason that our Saviour praises such importunity: "Oh, woman, great is thy faith!" Why? because it has taught you the true humility, that humility which makes you cling to your request the more tenaciously because it has been received without any encouragement.

But now there is the intervention of a third party between our Lord and his petitioner; his disciples besought him to send her away, because she cried after them; they do not seem at first to have penetrated their Master's motive for leaving her thus in suspense; feeling that there was a distressing interruption from her lamentations, they wished it to cease, and there is scarcely a doubt that they intended her dismissal should be favourable; but, however this circumstance might serve, for the moment, to raise her hopes, there was discouragement arising out of it which was alone more than an ordinary trial of faith, patience, perseverance, and humility, every one of which were so strikingly displayed by this woman. She must have thought, and so must all who heard

them, that the recommendation of the disciples would have had great weight with our Lord, and we can scarcely imagine that there were any who heard it who did not believe that the woman would now be sent away rejoicing in the mercy she pleaded for. But, no; whether or not Jesus disapproved of their reason for making the request, we cannot now venture to pronounce; but it is possible he may have thought that there was something of selfishness in it, and if so, that would be an additional reason for withholding for a time the boon which it was his purpose to grant, although the fault lay not with the original petitioner.

Now, when the woman saw that the interference of the disciples was in vain, it is likely that her feelings became doubly embarrassing to her—her need of a merciful acceptance was indeed great; the tale of woe she related might well move one's heart to hear. Her expectations had been raised; she had not, perhaps, for a moment hesitated to conclude finally in her mind, however she might have sometimes allowed their full weight to all objections, that she would at the last obtain mercy. The reports which were spread abroad concerning Jesus represented him as never turning away his face from the poor or the afflicted. He seemed to live for no other

purpose but to go about saying and doing whatever was for the good of the souls and bodies of all the people, whether Jews, Samaritans, or Gentiles generally; there was no kind of malady which he did not cure; he was thronged with applicants, and as many as came to him were healed of their diseases; and yet now her own extreme humility and earnestness, the eloquence of her touching facts, and the intercession of the disciples, all seem insufficient to lead to the desired end; were any circumstances more likely to leave an unfavourable impression upon her mind regarding the Lord? To witness the success of others in obtaining what they lawfully desire, while we ourselves seem to have all our wishes frustrated, and yet are not permitted to see why the difference should be made, is one of the most searching tests of our state of mind; it is in such a position, if in any, that the wisdom of religion will direct us, and its power uphold us; but our faith must be vigorous and decisive, or else we may make shipwreck of it. God often grants and withholds what we ask him for in a manner wholly inexplicable to us, and yet ever for our good, or for some good to others, which, if we could always know, would, even in the midst of our own disappointment, give us some cause for joy; right feelings towards God

interest us for our fellows in a way nothing else can; they teach us even to forego our own advantage for the benefit of others, and to view every good they thus receive as bestowed upon the Lord himself: inasmuch as it is done to one of the least of the little ones, is it not done to him? But if there be no adequate faith, patience, or humility, the natural character will be insufficient to accommodate itself to restraints and delays which seem unjust, because the reasons for them are not evident. But here is a very fine specimen of resignation,—no disappointment could be of sufficient weight to sink such a person. Our Lord's answer to the disciples, so far from discouraging her, called forth fresh energies of mind, and drew from her an appeal which attracted the high commendation of the Deity itself. "I am not sent," said he, "except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." I cannot; "it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs." Here, again, was a sharp renewal of the trial; but we are to observe, that there was nothing in our Saviour's words or conduct which could have been intended to justify that supercilious and contemptuous conduct of the Jews which heaped opprobrious names upon the Gentiles. It was not uncommon among them to compare the Gentiles to dogs. The dog, although noted for his sagacity, and capability of strong

attachment, is, at the same time, remarkable in some points, which rendered the comparison odious. To compare men to an animal, not only classed among the unclean beasts, but distinguished and proverbial for greediness, uncleanness, and contention, was more than our Lord could approve, coming, as it did, from those whose conduct had been such as to call forth his own decided disapprobation: at the same time, the character of the Gentiles rendered them, as we must see from St. Paul's account of it, worthy of the worst appellatives, although the application of them by those who were scarcely, if at all, better was culpable. But our Lord uses the circumstance in the way of allusion to a fact, in order to try her, as it were, to the uttermost. Human temper is very often the undisguised indicator of principles; and it frequently happens, that when some unpleasant circumstance occurs, self-command is lost, temper moves us from our equanimity; and the natural disposition openly contrasts itself with whatever degree of desire we may have to gain the mastery over evil. In our Lord's interview with this woman he leads her step by step, until he brings out her whole mind and principles, and exhibits her in the possession of faith and virtue truly wonderful. To abstain altogether from any remark, would have been a

proof of more than usual meekness, when language so likely to provoke to wrath has called up to her remembrance. To think of replying, and to reply with so much quickness and power, showed an energy of mind and a bold discretion, which might well raise surprise amongst the disciples. "Truth, Lord," said she, "yet the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from their masters' table!" Could humility, or faith, or reverence for the person of our Lord surpass this? She is willing to be classed with those who are called the dogs—she believes that she can, but with the smallest crumb of mercy, receive all, and more than she desires; she, therefore, asks but that which none refuse even to the dogs themselves,—she only asks the crumbs. Her conduct won for her not only the object which she sought, but the highest honour accompanying its achievement. "O, woman," said our Lord, "great is thy faith!"

I may surely gather from this, that no external disqualification which I am unable to remove should keep me from making known my requests to God. Who could have been more disqualified than the woman of Canaan, even in her own opinion; and yet who could be more sanguine or more earnest? Our blessed Saviour's invitation is to come when weary and heavy laden—

when our very disqualification presses as a weight upon the mind. The very cause that keeps multitudes from God is that which ought to bring them to the throne of grace. It is in Christ that God will behold the suppliant; and every child of man, who in detestation of sin comes as a sinner, to cry with all his heart for mercy through the Mediator, is received with open arms. There are many who pass into middle life without venturing to approach the Lord's table. Some may have been prevented by a cause now without remedy,—a deficiency of religious instruction, an unwillingness to be taught, or, perhaps, some great violation of morality,—time and reflection and prayer and the Bible and sermons may have produced, with the blessing of the Holy Spirit, a great change of heart and mind; and yet there may be rather a disposition to shun than to cultivate opportunities of coming to God,—a fear of unworthiness, a sense of disqualification, keeps them back. Our Lord's declaration, "Blessed are the poor in spirit," ought rather to bring them. He that feels himself to be unworthy, and has forsaken his old sins, cannot be far from the kingdom of God. Had the woman of Canaan refrained from seeking Jesus because she felt herself unworthy, she would not have enjoyed her blessing. Is it because when we were ignorant

and out of the way, and because sins were committed by us, and we now feel their pressure upon our consciences, we should be afraid to come to God? No; but the reverse. Jesus Christ is our High-priest, touched with a feeling of our infirmities, though he sinned not,—we may, therefore, come boldly. “Having boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way that he has consecrated for us through the vail, that is to say, his flesh, let us draw near with faith.” This word boldly signifies in the original freedom of speech, speaking out without fear or hesitation the whole workings of your mind: this was what the woman of Canaan did; she felt that she was permitted to plead with Jesus; she used great liberty of speech so far as opening out her mind in a reverential manner; she freely stated the extent of her misery, and she as freely stated the grounds on which she expected mercy. This transaction is a proof of the value of a becoming earnestness. The cries of the woman disturbed the disciples; they assigned that as a reason why she should be sent away; yet our Lord does not reprove the earnestness of those cries.

Nor can we hope to obtain from God what he reserves for those who really desire his mercies, unless we manifest an anxious wish for them, and



evinced, by our mode of application, that we do indeed set the proper value on it: there is undoubtedly their own peculiar blessing for all who hunger and thirst after righteousness. It is needful for every Christian who has serious thoughts of heaven to cultivate desires for spiritual elevation here. Tastes will grow up within us if we read and meditate, and the gratification of those tastes will engage the affections, enlisting the feelings on the side of religion and so making sure of the heart; but where all the feelings are on the side of the world, and all the convictions on the side of God, the tastes soon become habitually vitiated and almost incapable of recovery. It is with the tastes as it is with the conscience when they assume and retain for many years a peculiar character, and that borrowed from the corruption and illusion that is in the world; they may become sealed up hermetically in that form, and so cut off from any external influences except those which have previously acted upon them. We are, therefore, in order to ensure earnestness in prayer, to look for the special grace that will overrule every thought, and bring it into captivity unto Christ.

Another remark may be made upon this transaction, we are not to be disappointed if we do not obtain an early answer to our petitions: though

God may not seem to hear, yet he does hear, and he cannot be indifferent; you can offer no petition to God which is not a call for mercy; every want that the Deity supplies to us is supplied by mercy—we are all on a level, a perfect level, in this respect; the most experienced and exalted Christian, if there be any petition granted him, obtains his answer exactly on the same grounds as the new penitent whose conscience has smitten him to-day to pray for pardon for the sins of yesterday; there is no difference, it is all mercy. Now the dispenser of the mercy is the all-wise and omniscient God; he therefore knows how and where and when to give and to withhold. There may be as much mercy in withholding for a time, if not altogether, as in granting that which is sought; and there may be a blessing intended by that exercise of faith which is produced by its delay. Many who have thus been disciplined have in the end had peculiar reason to glorify God for this method of conferring his inestimable mercies.

## THE DOCTRINES OF THE HOMILIES.

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The limits of doctrine pointed out in the Homilies.—All the arguments against popular Protestantism arguments against the Homilies.—Their doctrine on the Scriptures—On man's depraved state—Salvation by Christ alone.—No justification by works.—Justification by faith.

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In the time of the first Reformers, there was no knowledge so needful as that which would instruct men where to begin and where to end, in matters of doctrine. The nature of the circumstances which then arose rendered it very important that there should be certainty in this ; there were very few subjects into which Romish error had not more or less crept then, and nothing could be done until the just and scriptural limits of every doctrine were drawn out and stated. To answer this end the Book of Homilies was compiled ; the most material points are there rather copiously entered into, and though we are not bound to every minor expression, yet we are certainly bound by the Articles to their doctrines. On these they are very explicit, and they deserve

at the present time to be brought into particular notice. For like the sun in the morning and in the evening may the Gospel be said to be ; there is twofold twilight ; at the twilight of the morning, the Homilies came as one of the auxiliary lights for those who awaited the coming beams. And who can tell but that in the Church the evening twilight has come, and those who lament the departing rays may need the smaller light also, to keep them from walking in darkness ? If there was need when men arose to give knowledge to the land, that they should not leave the people without a beacon to guide them, it is equally needful now, when there seems some danger of its being reserved from sight, if not removed from our reach. We should not altogether be left in the dark ; it is true there are many writings, which now come forth and leave us little doubt upon the matters in debate ; but although some of them are most valuable, yet none can be said to have the authority of the Homilies. Nothing can be clearer than the system which they teach throughout ; it is evident that the matters of which they treat were deemed the most essential at the time ; and they are so important now, that all the arguments against popular Protestantism are arguments against the Homilies ; a slight review of the book will satisfy any mind as to their doctrinal complexion.

In the second page of the first Homily there is used exceedingly strong language respecting what it calls the puddles of human traditions, and there we find these sentiments: "Let us reverently hear and read Holy Scripture, which is the food of the soul. Let us diligently search for the well of life in the books of the New and Old Testaments;" and further on, "It turneth our souls, it is a light lantern to our feet, it is a sure, stedfast, everlasting instrument of salvation." "The words of Holy Scripture be called words of everlasting life; they be God's instrument ordained for the same purpose; they have power to turn through God's promise, and they be effectual through God's assistance, and being received in a faithful heart, they have ever a heavenly spiritual working in them." "The humble man may search any truth boldly in the Scripture without any danger of error." The converting power of the Bible, its being a chief instrument in salvation, and applying to it such terms as effectual and heavenly and spiritual working in them, who are bold enough to look into it without any fear of being led into error, are the very opinions and statements for which we are called in question at this day; and yet here we read them in a book set forth as containing the doctrine of the Church of England, to be read by her ministers in her churches publicly,

when they are incapacitated from preaching. The more we examine this admirable compendium of doctrine, the more convinced must we be that the free and open statements of Gospel truth, which are now spoken against, are those which were entertained at the time of the Reformation, and those to which the Church of England is decidedly and always has been bound. I am far from admitting that the writers of the Oxford Tracts, or any writers who have chosen to depreciate the doctrines of grace, and to set up in their stead the notion of human merit and the Divine efficacy of mere ceremonials, ought to be deemed to have acquired any strength by the number of examples which they can produce of men who, although within the Church, have either departed from these views, or never having had them, strive to interpret the Articles of the Church or the Homilies, so as to favour their own sentiments. So far as the interpretation of the Articles goes, no man of any rank in the Church has a right to explain them except in the obvious and literal sense which the words convey\*; and having

\* "No man hereafter shall either print or preach to draw the Article aside any way, but shall submit to it in the plain and full meaning thereof, and shall not put his own sense or comment to be the meaning of the Article, but shall take it

been pledged so to interpret them, it is scarcely to be supposed that any other rule of interpretation could be applied to the Book of Homilies. After establishing this primary matter, that all men have a right to the Scriptures, that they ought to exercise it, and that in the exercise of it they are not so liable to error as some believe, the Book of Homilies proceeds to lay that broad and deep foundation of all the other doctrines of the Christian religion, the entire depravity of man's nature. This is a truth resisted violently by the Church of Rome, and opposed, more or less, by all who have high notions of something meritorious in man, and yet it is a truth maintained powerfully in the second Homily:\* "Hitherto," as we read towards its close, "we have heard what we are of ourselves, very sinful, wretched, and damnable; again, we have heard, how that of ourselves, and by ourselves, we are not able either to think a good thought, or work a good deed, so that we can find in ourselves no hope of salvation; but rather whatsoever maketh to our destruction." When a man is convinced of this, it is impossible that he can receive any

in the literal and grammatical sense."—Declaration prefixed to Thirty-nine Articles agreed upon by the Archbishops and Bishops, A.D. 1562.

• On the Misery of Man.—Part II.

other doctrine than that of salvation and deliverance from such a state by the free, unmerited, and gracious gift of God; and he will repel from him as, next to the destroyer of souls, his greatest enemy, the man who will venture to speak to him of the value of any works he can do towards effecting this deliverance. His hope must come from some far better source than even his own heart, however convinced of its pollution or anxious to be cleansed; there is no more effectual method of driving away and banishing the unholy deceptions of the doctrine of human merit, than to persuade men of the condition in which God's Word teaches us that they are all placed by nature since the fall, so that in meeting opinions which directly or indirectly involve this subject it is, perhaps, best in every instance to meet them by preaching or stating the Gospel, rather than by controversy, which may become irritating, and, even though powerful, may perhaps prove to be productive of more evil than good; but, when novel errors appear, or when old errors are revived, or so intermingled with truth that for a time they may lead us astray, it is needful to point out what the true doctrine and what the real error is; and nothing prepares the way so effectually for this as taking each system and placing it by itself, seeing what is its foundation,



what are its proportions, what are its tendencies, how strong it is, how far it has gone, how far it may go, what good or evil it has done, and, if it be the true one, where it ought to stop, and how far it ought to go. I know of no book more fitting to do this than the Book of Homilies: not only because that book was drawn up at the time of the publication of its first part, containing the twelve Homilies mentioned by Hume,\* with this very view, but because both by these and the Homilies contained in the second book things doctrinal and things practical are very clearly, powerfully, and satisfactorily set forth, while yet they are so entirely free from the peculiar Church questions which afterwards arose, and which have of late years been so unhappily revived, that they seem well suited for the general reader, who will always be sure to find in these discourses, which are a part of the Confession of Faith of the founders of the Reformed Church of England, the fulness, the comfort, the riches, and all the blessings of Christ's holy Gospel. These Homilies are not dry morsels of morality misplaced and valueless; they are not empty or vapid disquisitions upon this or that particular mode of worship; they

\* History of England, vol. 4, page 249.

are not unedifying reasonings upon any part of the mere external machinery of the Church; they are not cold criticisms upon the meaning of a word or of a phrase, but they are warm, hearty, fervid exhortations; they are deep and spiritual statements; they are bold and scriptural remonstrances; they are addressed in demonstration and in power to the awakened conscience; they are just the style of doctrine which we need to rouse men to see their need of conversion; they are what was deemed wholesome food for the soul by men who were tried to the uttermost in the depth of persecution, and who drank to the very dregs the cup of misery for conscience' sake. Look into the Homilies, and you will find in them every tenet now attacked by the writers of the "Tracts for the Times," and this is no small proof that the Articles,\* which they say are with them (are not—in their plain, literal, obvious meaning most certainly they are not, nor could they, except by the greatest violence, be made to express the principles which would now be drawn from them by the Tractarians)—they were intended to convey the glad tidings of salvation to perishing sinners, through the free grace and unmerited mercy and com-

\* The Thirty-fifth Article of religion asserts, that the Homilies contain a godly and a wholesome doctrine, &c.

passions of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and by the influences of His Holy Spirit. No man of any degree of candour could, I think, read over our Articles of religion, so far as they relate to principles of faith, the nature and value of works, the use of the Holy Scriptures, and for a moment deny that they are what is now commonly termed Evangelical; indeed there is such plainness upon all those matters in the Bible itself, that it would have been impossible for men of honesty at the time of the Reformation to have put forth any other view; if they had not come out entirely from the precincts of doctrine as it is peculiarly Romish, there could have been no Reformation—they must have remained as they were, and even though a degree of toleration in matters affecting conscience and not altogether essential, might perhaps have been allowed some, to prevent an outbreak,—for of this there are instances,—but to what extent it would have reached is very doubtful, yet still but little good could have been done; the same despotic rule would have remained, the same chains for the soul would have been forged, the same narrow cell would have been provided for the mind, and any man who dared to ask a question, who wished to investigate, or who had the presumption to suppose for a moment that either he or any others had a

right to be satisfied on any subject whatever, even though it most nearly concerned him, would have found to his cost that he was a fool for his pains. There is not in all the world that thing so despicable, so worthy of the indignation of every open and upright mind, as spiritual arrogance; and certainly no man is more contemptible in the eyes of his fellow-creatures, or in all probability more displeasing to God, than he who lends himself to be the instrument of ecclesiastical injustice or tyranny. The religion of Jesus Christ teems with benevolence; it is the overflow of love; its grand characteristics are mercies, long-sufferings, compassions, that come and flourish and abound every day.

But the doctrine concerning the Scriptures and the depravity of man are followed up in the Homilies by those other principles which shine forth conspicuously in the Gospel of Jesus Christ—the way of salvation by Christ is next opened out, to the utter exclusion of every other system; and it is to be observed, that this is a real and not a nominal exclusion; for they who trade and traffic in merit, and always wish to make human nature to be something while it is nothing, are very zealous, as it would seem, in using the name of Christ and speaking of his salvation; but they explain it away in such a manner as to make it absolutely nothing, while

those things which they substitute for it, and which have no foundation or authority in the Word of God, are made to be almost, if not altogether, everything; and although there are those amongst them who do not stretch out the rule entirely so far, but allow a sort of mitigation of it, yet even that softening down seems upon investigation to be a deep dishonour to the Saviour, and it is not the less so in degree because it is deliberate; it is that view of these subjects which leaves the sinner to do what he can, and which holds out to him the idea that his imperfections will be made up by Christ. But the Lord of glory has no companion in the work of Salvation. He chose to have no associate, no fellow-labourer, no, not the highest saint; no, not the purest angel,—nor can we think that we who are covered with guilt from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot—not one whole part in us,—could avail a whit; but the very reverse, for according to the statement already drawn from the Homily in this essay, whatever is in us tends rather to destruction than to life, and whatever is the reverse is given us as the gift of God, so that neither more nor less is to be attributed to us in the matter. The “Homily of Salvation” is designed to shew that since “No man can by his own acts, works, and deeds, seem they never so good, be justified, and made

righteous before God : every man is of necessity constrained to seek for another righteousness of justification, to be received at God's own hands ; that is to say, the forgiveness of his sins and trespasses in such things as he hath offended ; and that this justification or righteousness, which we thus receive of God's mercy and Christ's merits embraced by faith, is taken, accepted, and allowed of God, for our perfect and full justification ;" and the same Homily is most express in declaring, in a very lucid and edifying manner, that most important of almost all matters in religion to be understood—the place and office of works. Here we find the Church of England speaking by her sainted martyrs, for the Homilies are the voice of those who shed their blood for the testimony of Jesus ; it speaks the truths for which they died, and one of these is—what was so well expressed by them in this Homily—that "the grace of God shuts out the justice of man ; that is to say, the justice of our works, as to be merits of deserving our justification ;" and that faith excludes good works, (not as duties, for we must do them,) but "it excludeth them so that we may not do them to this intent, to be made just by doing of them." To make this statement the more complete, the second part of this Homily takes up the subject of faith, being the same

Homily as we find the 11th Article referring us to; in these words—"Wherefore that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort, as more largely is expressed in the Homily of Justification." It is extremely difficult for any plain, straightforward mind, taking words to mean what the dictionaries of our language and the common use of them tell us they import, to understand how after all this and a great deal more, any set of men holding office in our Church can venture to come before the face of their congregations, to assert that it is a doctrine of the Church of England that works are the condition of our justification. The Romanists certainly have rules of interpretation for the Bible which may possibly be applied to the Prayer-book, and so make it speak what is contrary to its own express words; for by that method when we read, "Search the Scriptures," the words mean, Do not search them; when we read, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures," it means, Ye err, because ye know the Scriptures; when they say to the worshipper of the angel, "See thou do it not," the words signify, See thou do it. In this way only can the standards of the Church of England be painted black, their proper colour being white. The Homily thus referred to, and supported by the Article as agreed upon by the

Archbishops and Bishops in Convocation, says,—  
 “Consider diligently these words, Without works, by faith only, freely we receive remission of our sins,”—what can be spoken more freely than to say, that—“freely, without works, by faith only, we obtain remission of our sins?” Such is the plain, deliberate, repeated language of the Church of England; and it is moreover asserted in the same Homily, that the best and most ancient Christian writers have asserted the same doctrine; and while this Scripture principle, without a reception of which man will for ever be out of his true position in relation to God, is thus maintained, it is in the same document most distinctly proclaimed, that works have their due value and importance, and this is very happily expounded by shewing how justification belongs to God; and so neither man nor his works can have any concern with it, but that obedience is a duty indispensable, though not meritorious on man’s part, and consists in the performance of good works. There is but another of the Homilies that I shall now refer to, but it is one of great consequence; it is the sixteenth of the Second Book, containing very ample statements on the subject of the Holy Ghost. Of these I content myself with taking one. Speaking of man being born of the Spirit, it says, “As for the works of



the Spirit, the fruits of faith, charitable and godly motions, if he have any at all in him, they proceed only of the Holy Ghost, who is the only worker of our sanctification, and maketh us new men in Christ Jesus."

Here, then, we have those grand radical doctrines of the Christian religion broadly and distinctly set down. The Scriptures to be used freely by all, without fear of error in an humble use of them; the entire depravity of man's nature; grace and faith shutting out good works from any concern in justification; man justified in consequence of God's free forgiveness,—this justification becoming ours by faith only, and the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit. Upon these every statement of religion must turn; whatever does not fall in with these is inconsistent with the Gospel and full of danger to man.

At the present day, indeed, a party has appeared in the Church of England who have taken no small liberty in connecting their publications with the name of one of her Universities\*, whose occupation is to pick up the old lumps of error

\* The writers of the "Tracts for the Times," usually called the "Oxford Tracts," have no sanction from the University of Oxford; they are not even printed in the University Press, though dated from Oxford.

which were cut off, and thrown aside at the time of the Reformation, and to endeavour to refit them to the truths from which they were then separated, although perhaps, not exactly by the same joints, yet still effecting the reunion; and therefore the Homilies, standing as they do upon such venerable authority, and speaking, as they unquestionably do speak, the sentiments of the whole Church of England as an ecclesiastical body, whatever any number of ministers or private members may think or write, serve a noble purpose at present, and enable those who read them to perceive where the error begins, and where the doctrine ends.

## MARTHA AND MARY.

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Our Lord's partiality for the family of Bethany.—His visits to that village.—The respective conduct of Martha and Mary when Jesus visited them.—The uncharitable view of Martha's behaviour.—Her zeal for Christ.—Mary's exemplary demeanour.

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OUR Lord's acquaintance with the family of Bethany has always been thought a very interesting part of his private history. Situated within a few hours' walk of Jerusalem, he occasionally came to that village, where, in the houses of Martha and Simon the leper, there occurred several scenes which present his character in an amiable and in every way a most delightful aspect. When we remember the Divine command which bids us take him as our example, and when we trace out his conduct in all the details of his life, his perfection, not only in all that is good, but in all that is attractive, presents as fine a model as the mind can conceive. Dignity

and condescension are so blended in him, that it is difficult to say in which he excelled most. The greatest subjects which can engage the thoughts in connexion with man's spiritual interests and the smallest incidents of life, were almost placed upon a level by him without lowering the one, or giving an undue place to the other. He gave at least to each his decided attention. He was as ready to converse freely with Martha in her humble dwelling at Bethany, upon her mistaken notions in the management of her household concerns, as to discuss with the Scribes and Pharisees the subject of their apostasy from God. Wherever Jesus found himself, or whatever was the nature of the circumstances by which he was surrounded, the incidents of the moment were sure to furnish him with topics that never failed to serve the great cause he had in hand. His intercourse with Martha's family shows to how great a degree he possessed the finer sensibilities of our nature. When the intelligence was brought to him that Lazarus was sick, he was upwards of twenty miles distant; but neither the length of the journey, nor the efforts of his disciples to restrain him, were sufficient to keep him from Bethany. Indeed, he must have known, that the course which he intended to pursue in reference to the raising of Lazarus,

(whom he allowed after death to pass into a state of decomposition, that he might by raising him to life give testimony of his Divine power,) would exasperate the Jews, as it eventually did, and drive them to the resolution of putting him to death. But notwithstanding all, he hastened to Bethany; and when Mary, the sister of Lazarus, met him, and when he saw her weeping, the Lord of glory felt for the sorrows of humanity, and he groaned in the spirit and was troubled.

He seems to have been attached to Bethany, and from his partiality towards the family of Lazarus and its vicinity to Jerusalem, he often visited it. From Bethany he sent his disciples for the ass upon which he made his triumphal entry into Jerusalem. To the calm and retired village of Bethany he returned the same evening, unexcited by the extraordinary scenes of the day. To Bethany he came in the awful hours that not long preceded the Last Supper and his crucifixion; and to the same favourite spot he returned when, after his resurrection from the dead, he was about to ascend to the glory which he had laid aside for the purpose of accomplishing our redemption.

When our Lord entered the house of Martha, as is described in the Gospel, she was exclusively occupied in making what she deemed the needful

preparations for him.\* Mary, on the other hand, gave herself up to an uninterrupted attendance to his conversation. There are two motives by either of which Martha may possibly have been influenced in the course which she pursued; nothing could be more natural than that at such a time, she should have wished, as mistress of the house, that the entertainment of her distinguished, though apparently humble guest, should be in itself reputable to her; and that in order to effect this, it should have all the appearance of forethought, exactness, comfort, agreeability, and expense. The latter idea probably suggested to some old writers the strange notion that our Lord told Martha that one dish only was needful, an interpretation which seems to rob the passage of all its beauty and its power. It is possible too, that Martha may have had no other design in her care and toil than to gain the esteem and approbation of our Lord, by displaying before him a willingness to suffer any degree of inconvenience, and to undergo any labour, in order that his reception might be throughout suitable to the dignity of his character; but supposing either of these influences to have actuated her, we should be obliged to come to a conclusion more unfavourable of Martha than charity allows. Nothing could be more decidedly selfish than one or other of

\* Luke x. 41, &c.

these motives; if her object was, that Christ should notice her taste or her profusion, selfishness was clearly there. If she designed that he should direct his attention to her self-denying pains, the same feeling was lurking even there. But we know nothing of Martha to justify us in charging her with selfishness, it would be very unfair towards her memory to associate it with such a charge. It is far more likely that she felt a real anxiety to promote the personal accommodation and comfort of her Lord; and, indeed, judging from our Saviour's words to her, as will be more fully expressed in the sequel, there seems to have been nothing in the general character of Martha, or, in this particular instance, derogatory to her in any way, except that she did not evince the same liveliness of spiritual perception as her sister Mary, and that she fell into an error with respect to the manner of pleasing Christ. Can we for a moment doubt but that she loved and revered him? Can we suppose that she attached no value to his instructions? Surely we cannot easily forget the knowledge and piety that appeared in Martha when Lazarus was dead; indeed it is not unworthy of remark, that the respective conduct of Martha and of Mary on that occasion and on this, when our Lord remonstrated with Martha, seems to have been quite reversed. When Jesus was approaching Bethany we are told that Mary sat

still in the house, but that Martha, as soon as she heard that he was coming, went and met him, "and she said, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died; but I know that whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee;" and when Jesus replied to her that her brother would rise again, she expressed her belief in the doctrine of the resurrection; and when he declared himself to be the resurrection and the life, she distinctly declared herself to be a believer in him: "Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world." This was no doubt the faith of that entire family, and it was the ground of the affectionate tie subsisting between them all and the Lord, for it is said by St. John, that Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. It is true that Mary also went to meet Jesus, but not till Martha had returned to her, and announced that he called for her; it does not, therefore, seem proper to deem Martha altogether heedless of holy things. There seems to have been a very marked distinction in point of natural character between the two sisters; Mary was sedate, deliberative, pensive, perhaps; we see something like proof of this on the two occasions already referred to: at one time she sits still in the house, while Martha runs to meet him; at another she sits at his feet while



Martha is busily engaged in household preparation and management. Martha was, as her conduct indicates, an active, anxious, and somewhat restless person, attaching more importance to appearances than was necessary. We may say of her reception of our Lord that it seems to have been dictated by the kindest motives, and the best intentions, but it proved she had not attained so much in Christian experience as Mary; like Peter, who thought that his Master ought not to die, she may have been of opinion that the privations to which he was subjected ought if possible to be avoided or alleviated. She knew his wants, and she could not easily forget the sorrows of one who was so kind a friend to her family. We can scarcely think that, with such a mind and spirit as she seemed to have, while they were still without that high measure of spiritual colouring that had been given to Mary's, she could think with equanimity of the Christ, the Son of the living God, in the condition of destitution which he assumed; but probably she did not know or remember that this was the appointed way in which he was to accomplish his work, and that if he were to be taken from his sufferings and made happy and comfortable in the homes of his disciples, the very purposes for which he appeared amongst them would thereby be frustrated. Mary's reception of our Lord was certainly of a

very different character from Martha's: "She sat at the feet of Jesus, and heard his word." There is something extremely beautiful in these expressions; language often seems to assume the office of painting, and to throw out in light and shade in almost living pictures the scenes which it describes; she sat at the feet of Jesus, and she heard his word. How many views of Christian character are unfolded to the eye when first it traces these simple expressions; humility is the foremost—she sat at his feet; she admits her need of an instructor. Her unconcern in things of temporary interest when such a season of profit in heavenly subjects came is no less exemplary; it is one of the highest endowments we receive through Divine grace, to be able to disengage ourselves from secular concerns, and to hold the mind and the affections free from the attractive influences of the world; these have a controlling power, unless where the love of Christ has taken root very deeply; from these Martha was not wholly free. It is a matter of more than ordinary difficulty to prevent even the apparently insignificant portion of the affairs of daily domestic life from engrossing our attention and thrusting out God. Mary seems happily to have been above them all; elevated by her humility and single-mindedness, and possessed of an independence that could not

be affected by the incidents of time, because it was founded upon her happy indifference to the world. But there was more than this. Mary sat motionless. She sat, if we can trust the picture framed by imagination from the words descriptive of her, in an agony of attention to the words of Christ, motionless and breathless ; so she was to the eye externally, and yet she was neither ; the energies of her mind were fully called into action ; the ecstasy of her rejoicing soul as it drew in life, and warmth, and power, and freshness, and joy, and hope from the Lord were called into action.

The Word of Christ, in all the largeness of its promises, and in all the fulness of its consolations, is called by the Holy Ghost, the breath of his lips, and the spirit of his mouth, which is but another form of expressing the same. That Word penetrates the inmost recesses of the soul when breathed upon it ; as at the first creation God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life, so at the second, when the new man after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, God breathes his living, saving, and comforting Word to crown this new creation ; and when it comes thus over the believer's soul, it is gratefully inhaled ; it sheds the refreshing influence of its fragrance throughout ; and Mary, who felt all this, could have said with truth, as she received it pure

from the original source, "His lips like lilies drop sweet-smelling myrrh."

A new topic now presents itself in the question which Martha required our Lord to decide upon, whether Mary should assist her. In examining the complaint of Martha we must not lose sight of the circumstance, that, although we may interpret the decision of Christ as a rebuke, yet it is conveyed in the mildest possible form, and perhaps might not improperly be called a remonstrance only. Her reason for wishing the assistance of Mary may possibly have been her desire to be sooner disengaged from what she deemed to be indispensable, that she also might sit at the feet of her Lord and hear his word; but to delay as she did, even though not assisted, was sadly overrating the importance of the matters in which she was so sedulously occupied in the presence of Christ, more especially when he was actually engaged at the time in solemn and edifying conversation with Mary. Such an opportunity could but seldom be enjoyed, and it was by no means unlikely that it must under any circumstances prove very brief, and that it might be suddenly interrupted by one of those calls which were sometimes the occasion of bringing Christ to the relief of suffering humanity; the appeal to him, therefore, was by no means responded to according

to the expectations of Martha ; she seems to have felt very much the weight of the labour which she had imposed upon herself, and she almost lays blame upon our Lord for not observing how unable she considered herself to perform it without help. There is evidently a want of temper in Martha's language, a degree of impatience almost approaching to peevishness ; but notwithstanding all this, there is marked tenderness in our Lord's answer to her, "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things ; one thing is needful ; and Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her." One thing is needful, indispensably needful, so needful as to set aside all consideration for other things when they interfere ; there is a positive and a perpetual necessity for it ; a necessity that cannot for one moment be lost sight of ; it invests the thing required with immeasurable importance, and whatever it be that stands in its way must yield at once. Mary has chosen that good part, that needful, that invaluable portion which she shall not lose. The soul is everything ; all things else in comparison of it are nothing ; they are but matters of the utmost insignificance you are concerned for ! What an authoritative assurance of the overwhelming importance of religion is thus presented to us ! and yet, though thus announced,

how ready is the enemy to suggest it is not so important, it is not so needful ! A thousand arguments start up to repel the urgency with which this is enforced in the Gospel, but the wakeful spirit of the Omnipotent is ever ready to whisper into the believer's ear, "One thing is needful."

It may be further observed that the case of Mary furnishes an edifying example. To be found at the Saviour's feet, and hearing his Word, as Mary was, is true blessedness. Mary gave an eminent proof of the principle that ruled within her ; a few days before the final sufferings of her Lord, the village of Bethany was the scene of another meeting between him and this holy happy family, and then Mary took a pound of ointment of spike-nard,—very precious, so costly as to call forth the remonstrances of Judas,—and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair. The character of Mary is certainly one of the most interesting and instructive in the Gospel biography. How happy were it for every one did they partake of the humility, spirituality, liberality, and faith which she was adorned by.

## THE USE OF OUR GIFTS.

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Our various gifts not given exclusively for ourselves.—Illustrations from the parables, and the account of the Judgment.—The poor man's gifts.—The great influence of a religious poor man.—The gifts of all.

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THE gifts that come from God who can undertake to enumerate? The field of nature, the field of providence, the field of grace, are all to be examined; and when they are fully searched the result is, that they are teeming with the gifts of God which he has conferred upon his people. If they who are ignorant and out of the way are never forsaken by him, but have his rain descending upon them and his sun shining upon them, be they just or unjust,—if the sparrows and the ravens be fully fed by him, how much more eminently is it true of the followers and servants of God that they are the objects of his manifold grace? Even those who seem the least apparently favoured amongst those who know God and are known and recog-

nised by him have a world of blessings at his munificent hands. What though they be afflicted—have not their very afflictions made them the subjects of peculiar blessings, and brought to them gifts which without them they never would have received? How many have had new characters formed in the course of submitting to afflictive dispensations? How many have been made humble, patient, amiable, resigned, self-denying, charitable, full of faith, full of hope, full of zeal, all by the power of sanctified affliction? and are not these all gifts, or the results of gifts, that can be more or less made available from one to another? How numerous, then, and valuable are the gifts which the great body of Christians enjoy? How worthy of our careful investigation, that we may be certain we employ them as we ought? If it be true that we ourselves are not our own, that we have no right to do with ourselves as we may wish, or as we may feel would be right; if we are not our own, but bought with a price, and so the property of another; it becomes a question, on that ground alone, whether any gift or possession we have can properly be used as if it were exclusively given for ourselves. But the point is not merely argued out from this inference. When the duties and responsibilities of the New Testament dispensation are repre-



sented in the parable, they are spoken of under the similitude of money put into the hands of his servants by a man travelling into a far country, that they might trade with them, and reckon with him upon his return. This parable stands in a very striking connexion in St. Matthew's Gospel, and speaks most emphatically in the matter of practical religion ; it tells out to us undisguisedly what a demand there is upon us for solid, substantial holiness. Our Lord had spoken of the tribulation that was to be expected—he had uttered the parable of the fig-tree to be a solemn warning as to the events that were coming—he had spoken of the necessity of watching—he had pronounced the blessedness of the servant whom his master, on his return, should find fulfilling his commands ; and the miserable portion of him who forfeited his honour, violated his trust, and ate and drank with the drunken. This our Lord had done ; and he had followed it up with the parable of the ten virgins ; after which he published to the inquiring multitudes the parable in question ; and having done so, he proceeded, in direct connexion with it, to announce the particulars of the final judgment. Upon the whole, then, as all we have from God is thus spoken of in the Scriptures, and as this parable treats of the duties of which we speak,—I mean all our

duties,—we have a double ground for the inference, that the gifts and blessings we enjoy are not given exclusively for our own selfish use. Look at that description of the judgment with which this parable stands so remarkably connected. They who have proved their love to God by loving their fellow-creatures—who have ministered to the hungry, the thirsty, and the stranger, and ministered abundantly and effectually, are therein described as accepted; and they whose conduct, by being the reverse of this, made manifest their want of love to God or man, are, we are told, rejected. Nay, further, this description of the judgment shows us, that God looks upon all the gifts as so many means to be employed in his service—so many instruments for advancing the cause of religion; and that it, in fact, becomes a personal matter between us and God, how we use them; for our Lord, in this place, puts himself, as in his humanity, feeling for the sufferers, and enjoying whatever was done for them, as though he needed, or could profit by what man did. In how many ways may not all promote the benefit of one another? I suppose there is not a man alive who could not in various ways confer advantages upon a great number of his fellow-creatures. Take even the poorest, and the most unknown. The poor have often been emi-

nently honoured as the instruments of good. The apostles were poor—the Reformers were either all originally poor, or reduced to poverty. Our missionaries are all poor. To this day it is true, as it was in the days of our Saviour, when he honoured and adorned the condition of poverty in his own person, “That not many wise, not many noble, are called; but God hath chosen the poor of this world rich in faith.” Take a man upon whose head the sunshine of prosperity has never arisen,—whose converse, whose habitation, whose friends, whose occupation, whose thoughts, whose ambition, all bespeak the obscurity of his condition; take such an one as a Christian man, examine what gifts are given him from the unquestioned munificence of heaven, and see how far he is constituted a steward of the manifold grace of God. I think I see a sneering world smile at the supposed extravagance of this representation; but, nevertheless, it contains an argument that may yet tingle in the ears of many of the great, and noble, and wise, and rich, who now deride the principles, and despise the fruits, of true religion. The very poorest may be made an influential steward of God’s unfailing grace. There is a field for influence, and that the most important, which will yet exercise itself powerfully upon the Church

of God—there is a kind of influence that the rich have over the poor; but it is not that widespread and constant influence which can only be held by those who are continually among them, and who can enter into all their peculiarities. Whatever may be said to the contrary, I think a man's real influence is always most powerful in his own class of society. The greater number of those who have influenced mankind in a material degree hitherto, have acted upon those whom Providence had placed somewhat below them in the world, while many have done the same with their equals, and some with those who are above them; but there seems to me to be the greatest difference between the former and the two latter. He who exercises an influence only over those who may be benefited by his favour, or injured by the withdrawal of his countenance, and who at the same time possesses no influence either with his equals or his superiors, may be justly suspected of acting not so much by the weight of character as through the means of family connexion, delegated power, or wealth. But there is a tribute paid to simple virtue even by the worst of mankind, which is never awarded by high or low, either to birth, power, or riches. It is possible for a man through the mere effect of an upright and consistent character, and by

untiring perseverance in a righteous cause, so to gain upon mankind that he will at least be a means of much good in his own station of life, and will be honoured by all. I contend for it, then, that a poor, yea, the very poorest Christian, may attain to great influence among his equals; and I do think, that one of the great blessings and changes which the increase of vital religion will bring into the world will be this, that instruments of spiritual good will be raised up more abundantly everywhere, and especially amongst the great body of the people; and that the salt wherewith the soundness of the whole will be produced, the Christian leaven by which Gospel influences will make their way to the hearts of the millions around us, will be the holiness and zeal, and withal discretion, and great caution, mixed with determination and mildness, of those who live among themselves, and who belong to their own rank. The contact between the different classes of society—I mean to speak only of the two great classes which we usually denominate the rich and the poor—is very slight. What do we know of the habits of the poor? We may be aware generally of the fact, as to their being industrious or idle, provident or careless, sober and moral, or dissolute; but what do we know, or what can we know, of their style of conversa-

tion among themselves, their stock of similitudes, their maxims, their little conventional rules of right and wrong, their standards of excellence, or the reverse? How can we enter into the spirit of their familiar conversation with each other? How can we understand their allusions, or arrive at a true knowledge of what a great variety of their feelings may be? None, then, can attain to what I have been speaking of except themselves. We should be long domesticated with them before we can come to this knowledge; and without it we can have but little real influence with them; as it is, they are always under restraint when we address ourselves to them, and they can neither understand us fully, nor we them. We almost always see them in a mask, striving to conceal their own peculiarities so far as they are conscious of them, and to imitate what they deem superior in us. Think, then, of what power a godly poor man is possessed provided he be a man of moral courage; he will at first, if he be not resolute, be put down by slander and misrepresentation of all sorts, as well as by ridicule; but if he have nerve to set his face as a flint against all the attempts of the ungodly to undermine his stability, he will soon be respected, and his example will not fail to become influential. Now, such a man has many gifts,

and may use them eminently to the glory of God. If he only reflect for a moment, he will find that God has made him the repository of no small trust in the shape of gifts. How many persons will the poorest among us come in contact with in the course of his life? No man is so utterly obscure as not to meet throughout life, in one way or other, with a great variety of persons with whom his unavoidable business brings him more or less into conversation. Who can tell to what an infinite extent that intercourse may be blessed if it be the invariable rule of such a person to act upon his gifts discreetly? I do not mean that he should become a preacher, nor do I mean that he should be an inordinate talker on religion; but that he should, in all his intercourse with others, and with as little of words as possible,—for they usually create suspicion when too freely used,—endeavour to follow out the apostolic rule, “As every man has received the gift, even so minister the same one to another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.” The gifts of Christians in all classes are much the same, and consequently their duties; but being in some greater in extent, the duty and responsibility is the greater. Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, meekness, faith, goodness, temperance,—these may all be admirably acted upon for the

good of others by the truly Christian man; and I fully believe, that when the days of millennial happiness arrive it will be found that the great instruments of reformation, and of the production of spiritual life amongst the poor, will be the poor themselves.

To all, indeed, the questions will be put in the judgment, How have your gifts been ministered? Have you loved your fellow-creatures as you ought? Have you felt for the souls of those around you?—your own immediate family, your friends, your servants, your dependants? Have you used whatever God has given you like one who felt that all was to be managed for another, and not as if it were your own? Are you conscious of having exercised all your gifts “according to the ability that God giveth you?” If this, indeed, be so, and if you have faith and patience to await the good time of God’s increase, you will not fail to see the blessing come. It is happily ordained in heaven, that wherever true religion goes it not only makes the possessor happy, but causes him to be the instrument of communicating happiness more or less to those with whom he has to do.

And what a glorious thought it is, that when the fire is once kindled and begins to make its way, these gifts of the Christian will cause even



the men of the world to glorify their Father who is in heaven, while they promote the rapid spread of God's Word, and open out means whereby ungodliness is broken up, false religions give way, new territories are added to the Lord's dominions, till at length they will advance in their influences through all the world; and one grand testimony will be raised to testify the wisdom and goodness of that God who designed such efforts to follow from the right use of his gifts!

## THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

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The peculiar relation between the ministers of Christ and the truths and works they teach and labour in.—The error of neglecting, discrediting, or discouraging ministers.—The greater error of esteeming them too highly.—The apostolical succession, and an exclusive commission to be distinguished.—Definition of the Catholic Church.

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THE peculiar relation between the ministry in the Church of God and the truth which God instituted that ministry to teach, is sometimes almost unknown or forgotten, and sometimes made too important. It is the custom of many in these days to separate them purposely, and it is the habit of others to attribute too much to the fact and to the supposed manner of their connexion. They who pay all regard to the doctrine and no regard to the heralds who proclaim it in their official character as ambassadors of God, may have the warranty of their own conceptions; but they have not a justification of their sentiments, or of their conduct in God's

Word, wherein the apostle beseeches the brethren of Thessalonica to know them which labour among them and are over them in the Lord, and admonish them, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. None could speak with more humility of himself personally than even the highly-gifted Paul; none was more ready to acknowledge former sins or present failings, gifted and accomplished as he was; but after all, none was more forward to magnify his office. The Church of God, as to that part of it which is yet on earth, being the whole company of believers in Jesus, is an army in the midst of an enemy's country; the watchmen on her towers, the messengers of her mysterious truths, are commissioned to come and to lay before the enemy the terms of peace. Man is the party on the one hand, man's Almighty Maker is the party on the other; the former is the offender, the latter is to be propitiated. The ministers of the Almighty, although selected from among men, are yet ambassadors from the Eternal to their own fallen race. He that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me. When our blessed Lord first sent forth the apostolic messengers, their personal and official recognition were so mingled up with the subject of the reception of that truth of which they were the bearers, that the

persons and the opinions could not well be separated. The entrance into any place to carry the message was enough to commend them to those who desired to commend themselves to God; to receive the message, and yet to look coldly on the messenger, was after all to despise God. There was either a conjoint reception of the messenger and his message, or a total deprivation of the benefits and the blessings of the message; this is apparent from the very words of our Lord. "And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and there abide till ye go thence; and when ye come into a house, salute it; and if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you; and whosoever shall not receive you nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet: verily I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrhah in the day of judgment than for that city." And if that were the fate of obstinate Jews and ignorant heathens, when they had no sympathy with the appointed messengers, is there not a deeper stain of guilt upon those who pretend to be Christians, and yet so far insult the Almighty as to neglect, discourage, or discredit those who are over them in the Lord,—who have watched for their souls,—who have laboured for their instruc-

tion,—who have sought for their friendship,—who have wrestled for them in prayer, and who would submit to any privation, or engage in any labour, to procure for them either a temporal or a spiritual blessing? But while it is thus evident from facts and declarations issuing from the divine lips of our Saviour, that they who are not personally kind and condescending towards the messengers of the Cross cannot really have their hearts engaged by him who sent them; it is to be borne in mind, that error may be contracted in an opposite extreme, and persons be found offending God, by placing the ministers and stewards of his mysteries in a position which was not intended for them, and to which they are not entitled. It is not unfrequently forgotten, that those who exercise the office of the ministry do not constitute the Church. The Church in her final triumph and fulness is, in other words, “all who shall be saved.” The Church at any given period on earth is, the whole body of Christians then alive in its extended sense; in its more strict and limited, it is the blessed company of the faithful then living. There is in every Protestant Church more or less of the laic influence in the selection of pastors, although in some instances, as in the Church of England, the people have voluntarily and almost universally abandoned the exercise of their right;

and that so far and for so long a time, that I have known most intelligent persons who are ornaments of that Church, and yet who did not seem aware of this. The inhabitants of any parish where a candidate for orders usually dwells have a right to demand a public appeal to be made to the congregation in the parish church as to his fitness for the sacred office; and if any disqualification can be shewn and legally proved, it bars his admission to holy orders. There is thus even in the Church of England a sort of representation of the laity, however faint it may seem; at all events they enjoy what in every instance in which they can show a disqualification amounts to a veto; and after admission it is in the power and it is the duty of every private member of the Church, who is clearly aware of any ministerial guilt amounting to a violation of recognised and needful law, to bring it before the proper authorities, and to see that the Church receive no damage; so that "hear the Church" does not altogether and exclusively and in a bad sense mean hear the clergy. They ought to be first proved, and again and again when needful proved, and then they have a right to be heard and regarded. The definition of the Church, contained in the nineteenth Article of religion,—a remarkable proof of great caution on the part of those who drew it up,—mskea

no express mention of the clergy—they are but indirectly recognised in it. “The visible Church of Christ,” says the Article, “is a congregation of faithful men in the which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments be duly ministered according to Christ’s ordinance in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same.” The voice of the preachers in the Church, and the voice of all its other members, should ever utter sentiments that are unanimous; but these two voices are not by any means identical; they are not one, but two; and if either the one or the other be raised against any truth essential to salvation, or any rule or law ordained for edification, and not contrary to Scripture, the other must in faithfulness speak. As to the clergy, no faculty of arrogant dictation belongs to them; there is no superiority of any kind granted to them in the Divine warrant upon which they act but what is barely official; and whatever of official superiority there may be is merely in the circumstance of being set apart from secular pursuits, and consequently being better fitted by being able to devote their time exclusively to the work to take precedence in the matter of teaching, and more calculated to do honour to God in the administration of His sacraments generally speaking, than those whose minds are wholly engrossed

by worldly occupations. It is true, that authority is given them to declare the pardon of sins, which God alone gives to those who truly repent; but this official authority no more intrusts them with any real power over their people than it enables them to alter their own condition in reference to forgiveness or punishment. As of old the sacrifices were offered by the priests, first for their own sins, and then for the sins of the people, so now remission of guilt for both minister and people rests in every way with God. It is true also, that they are to reprove, rebuke, exhort; but only in the way of affectionate entreaty and solemn warning, and he who exercises not this part of his duty with all long-suffering and in the entire spirit of mildness, oversteps the limits of his commission and incurs the risk of inflicting an injury where God intended him to be the instrument of conveying a blessing,—indeed the very name of minister imports that there is no mastership in the office; for I believe everybody knows that the word means an attendant. “We preach not ourselves,” said the apostle, “but Christ Jesus the Lord and ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake.”

There is also an error of another kind, which has given rise to much bad feeling, if not to extended evil. I mean, declaring dogmatically



that some who claim and exercise the office of the ministry are not entitled to it. The long and rugged controversy on this subject can only be glanced at here. While I believe that episcopal ordination is an adequate and a venerable authority upon which I may undertake the office of a minister of Christ; and while I believe that the research and ingenuity of man can produce an ecclesiastical genealogy extending throughout the intervening ages between the nineteenth century and the Christian era, which, under all circumstances, is surprising in its apparent approach to perfection; and while I should regret to act without the authority of that mode of admission to my office, and should wish all others to have it, and cannot but feel pleased and gratified in proportion to the reality of this testimony to its having been handed down with such a general consent for so long a time; and even though I believed others had not adequate authority without it, yet I do not see the wisdom of striking out for myself upon private authority, and bringing forward as a public and imperative principle what our Church nowhere expresses in her Articles of religion or in her Homilies—that they are not ministers of Christ's Church who have not ordination at the hands of a bishop, that their sacraments are not valid, that their marriages are null, that their

preachings are vain, that they belong to no Church. I am in no\* way bound, as a minister of the English Church, to hold any one of these; the best of those men, who have adorned religion in the various grades of her ministry, men of faith, men of deep piety, men of truly spiritual views, men of learning too, the excellent of the earth, have been unable to bring their unbending consciences to believe in such a thing: they admit, indeed, that there is a succession, for none can deny that in this ministry one came after another; but on what grounds are we compelled to believe that the Church of Scotland or that the Independents or other similar bodies here and abroad, do not constitute each a portion of the Church? Is there any definition either in God's word or in any decided law of the Church of England that unchurches them? Certainly, if an interpretation be put upon the expression "rightly and duly administered," as applied to the sacraments, which has no foundation, except in polemical fire, there may seem to be a difficulty; but after all, this is only begging the question, as logicians say, for the real question is, "Are they qualified to administer the sacra-

\* It is admitted in the "Tracts for the Times," No. 41, ad Scholas—Via Media 2, vol. 4, that "the apostolical commission" is *wanting* in the Thirty-nine Articles.

ments?" Some affirm them to be as Korah and his company; it is to be hoped that no man ever believed this who affirmed it, for where is the parallel? The Scripture asserts the guilt of Korah, Dathan and Abiram, and explains its particulars: they had violated an order from which God had literally expressed it to be his will that there should be no departure; they moreover were infringing upon rights which God had by special donation conferred as hereditary upon a particular tribe and family. God himself was the Judge, and the glaring guilt was so great that it was not suffered to remain a day unpunished. Are there any parallels for these in the present case? Indeed, when we examine this matter closely, we must see, unless we are wilfully blind, that to assert that there is a ministerial succession with us, and that we have remained in its line, and can trace it up to the beginning, is one thing; but to denounce, unchurch, and consign to the worst condemnation so large a body as the unepiscopal Protestants of the world, (holding, as they do, the Holy Trinity, and all the great doctrines of the Gospel, producing as they have done, and are doing, some of the greatest lights of Christianity,) is another. There may be a decided succession, and they who stand in it may have a positive commission, yet it is not,

of necessity, an exclusive commission. They who separated from Rome, and do not enjoy episcopal orders,—struck off from Episcopacy, not because it was a succession, nor because bishops, priests, and deacons, in the sixteenth century were, as such, objectionable, but because while they who were in the right line had got into the wrong doctrine, there seemed to those who made the change to be no way of protecting the right doctrine, except by acting without that authority which certainly they did not despise, but which they believed they could not obtain on grounds that might satisfy their consciences; but in the case of Korah there was no plea like this; there was no doctrine objected to by him or his party; there was no interference with the true way of salvation or with the glory of God; there was no drawing away from what was scriptural, and true, and needful, of which they could complain. The sin of Korah was selfishness, ambition, and an utter want of humility, obedience, and fear. Was there any parallel between that state of things and the circumstances of those reformers who were not episcopally ordained? I almost blush for human nature as I pen these lines, for where was charity, beloved charity, when all was written about Korah? and yet this is but the half. What of Samaria? and here again

we may ask, where is the parallel? If there be no parallel, there is no argument; and if there be no argument in Korah or in Samaria for this harsh condemnation of Evangelical Churches which are not episcopal, there is certainly no argument at all for it. Samaria found an ungodly priest who was willing to contract marriage with an idolatress. He went among the Samaritans. God had confined true worship by express commands to a particular place and to a particular people—to a temple in a particular place. This priest set aside all. God would have his worship pure; this priest mixed it up with heathenism. God (if I may so apply the passage) gave his word, and great was the company of the preachers; but this priest was content with a portion of the Word, and he was separate from his fellows; there was none to bear him company. God would draw worldly and heathen men from the world, and have all men spiritual, this man would distort religion in order to frame it according to the world, to promote carnal, selfish, and worldly views. Is there a parallel here?

It is indeed unfortunate that when we first shook off the dominion of Rome, we could not proceed without divisions among ourselves, and that an uniform ministry has not been found to exist in Protestantism; still more have we to

lament that our divisions seem to be multiplying rather than lessening in number. How far a remedy is likely to arise for this we know not; but, so far as appearances are concerned, there seems at present but little ground for an expectation of it. The labours of many eminent men on all hands seem unhappily to be employed in widening rather than closing up the breach; and if we are to conjecture aught from such an unfelicitous state of things, it is that the predictions of Popery will be brought to pass, where it is announced that our principles of division will eventually destroy us. There is peculiar weight laid on the argument of probability by those who would instruct others\* in this matter—in the absence of better, it is their stronghold,—but there are points of Scripture from which we may, without being visionary, recognise in the horizon that bounds our world's times from the limitless ranges of eternity, the figures of counteracting probabilities, and so if there only be a balance, the stronghold is lost; and as the positive certainty of this being an indispensable requisite to a Church is not asserted in Scripture, or in our Articles, there is a further antagonist probability that our great Church interpreters did not believe it was. I conclude this subject for the present by a

\* See "Tracts for the Times," No. 19, vol. 1, "On Arguing concerning the Apostolical Succession."

quotation from an authority which has been honoured very highly by the authors of the Tracts themselves, whilst on the peculiarly distinguishing points which characterize them as broaching a new theology it has been ably employed against them. I prefer this quotation to that from a witness who might, however unjustly, be charged with a partiality to what are called Low Evangelical views of Church matters, although it may not reach the full explicitness of others which could be adduced—our judgment of the Catholic Church is briefly this: the Catholic Church (as the name, you know, expresses) is “the universal Church containing within it many particular Churches, even all congregations which retain the faith once delivered unto the saints, and contained in the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments. Every particular Church which holds the fundamental points of that faith, and in which the sacraments are duly administered according to Christ’s ordinance, in all things necessary to the same, is a branch of the Catholic or Universal Church; even if it have introduced the most dangerous corruptions of doctrine and of worship, yet if it still hold the foundations, still agree in essentials, it is not wholly cut off.”\*

\* “Letters to Charles Butler, Esq., by Rev. Henry Phillpotts, D.D., Rector of Stanhope, (now Lord Bishop of Exeter.) London, 1825.”

## THE WAY OF DOING GOOD.

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To do good is unavoidable when we are true Christians.—

Ridicule of those who from Christian motives are ever doing good.—No room for reasonable objection to our way of doing good.—Illustration.—False statements to sick Persons.—Evil must not be done that good may come.—The Jesuits.—Our danger of falling into this error in opposing the Tracts for the Times.

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THERE is one peculiar excellence in Christianity, which ought to attract admirers even from those whom we are accustomed to look upon as most hardened by a world which has few, if any, influences to soften the heart. It is that, when the principles which are peculiar to it have once been thoroughly implanted in us, we are unable to refrain from devising and effecting what will contribute to the happiness of others; but although this distinctive feature of true religion ought assuredly to gather around her standards all who prize what is lovely and of good report,



yet such is the extraordinary perversity of the human mind, that this very ground of claim to approbation is made one of the principal objections to a life devoted to religion. I have witnessed this in several grades of life, and in a great variety of places, for both the spirit of wisdom and the spirit of a foolish and wicked world are at all times and places as perfectly consistent with themselves as they are plainly opposed to each other. It is thought a suitable subject for ridicule, that those who have been awakened to a sense of their responsibilities should labour to fulfil them. It is deemed exceedingly proper to spend time, and money, and extreme attention upon dress and company; to fill up every hour of day, and almost of night, in amusements always dangerous, and seldom altogether innocent; to pant after a sight of the last new novel; to occupy a box in the theatre for a whole season; to wear out religion and health alike by late hours; to walk and ride; to see all shows and sights; to do whatever can be done that produces no good result to anybody: but it is considered perfectly laughable to think for a moment of throwing away time or money upon any other objects, but more especially upon such as do not furnish the means of gratifying the senses. The sons and daughters of irreligion are ruled

throughout all their actions by selfishness ; and if I were asked to point out briefly the difference between them and people who are truly religious, I should say, those are seldom interested in anything that does not centre in self, while these, according to the Scripture rule, “ look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others,”—the former include among them, as all bodies of people will, a large proportion of minds not of the nicest power of discrimination or the utmost freedom from prejudice, nor altogether devoid of that inherent injustice which is a mark of every unconverted person, to say nothing of the vulgar and wilful misrepresentation and chit-chat in which the baser class of minds daily delight, and which they constantly feed on. Now every part of our conduct, as persons professing that godliness is the aim of our life, and Heaven the object of our hopes,—for by the one we honour God as we are bound, and prove our faith and convince the gainsayer ; and by the other we shew that we are looking unto Jesus,—is liable to be examined by their watchful eyes on every side, so that it is needful for us at all times, not only to take heed to be ever doing good, but that we do it in the right way ; nor are we alone to consider man in this matter of so much moment. God will be as

much displeased as the scoffers at spirituality will be rejoiced, if we are found wanting in the most exact care, that while we have renounced the idol self, we do not permit the smallest inconsistency between the strict principles of truth and justice, and the manner in which we accomplish our objects, whatever they are.

Now there are two great principles which are never to be lost sight of, when we are searching out the true way to do good : first, that no advantage to the cause of truth ; no honour, if such it could be called, offered to God ; no result, no not even the conversion of a soul from sin, and its salvation from eternal misery, is to be attempted by any means which cannot stand the test of close examination, and come out with new lustre from every inquiry—evil must not be done that good may come ; and, secondly, that we add to this integrity of action its exact copy, in presenting all the external appearance of good and proving that it is honest, not only to Christians, but in the sight of all men. The first principle has long been a subject of debate, but as scholastic disputes and distinctions could not be introduced into a work intended only for the general reader, a very small part of the subject can find a place here. The question is, does the end, if it be a good one, justify means which may be taken to accomplish it,

even though they be admitted to be themselves bad? May a lie be told, a great or a small lie,—may injustice be done,—may false charges be brought against a man to terrify him, and either compel him to change his conduct, or to change or renounce bad opinions? May we wound or slay others to remove them from being obstacles in the way of any measures however good or desirable they may appear to be. These are but a few of the questions which arise on this matter. The Christian replies to every one of them, with his Bible in his hand, and in his heart the spirit of fear, love, and obedience to his God, in the negative. If a man be truly a Christian, according to the principles, motives, exhortations, warnings, and remonstrances, contained in Scripture, it is quite impossible that he can ever think of allowing himself in anything that is evil; in whatever likelihood of achieving good. God will not be honoured by what is procured with evil. He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and he is too severe and scrutinizing in his measurement of holiness to permit the most minute of its borders to be encroached upon by what partakes even of a doubt as to the excellence of its quality and nature. The liar and the murderer are both expressly excluded from heaven, so that no work or device of theirs, however it may seem to operate in favour of what is good and laud-

able, can by any possibility be acceptable or pleasing to God. Good is to be done by good, or else it is a sin not to refrain from doing what may seem good.

There is one example of doing evil that good may come drawn from common life, and familiar to every one, which I shall notice. I have sometimes been extremely surprised and shocked to find persons whose knowledge and experience in religion has been thought to be considerable, deliberately requesting others to state what was not true to a sick person, in order to produce a desirable effect—to conceal some matter from them which might injure them by excitement. The state of mind which produces the idea that this is a harmless act indicates the want of right views in the most painful way. What! at that awful period when an immortal soul is about to pass into eternity,—when earth and all its visions are about for ever to close to the mortal eye, and eternity opens upon it!—when God ought to possess every soul,—when heaven and holiness—when all that is lovely and of good report, should rule the heart of the dying patient, and of the living mourners, is that a time for a hateful lie to be produced? Would I have my dying friend happy? Would I have God propitious? Would I have heaven open? Would I have the Holy Spirit, the Sanctifier, present? Would we have the Lord

Jesus among us? If so, I dare not trade in the very smallest falsehood—nay, though life itself were shortened by it, truth, and truth alone, must then prevail if there is to be any blessing expected,—yea, and perfect truth at all times, and in all things. A falsehood is probably the most detestable of all sins, because it is the grand sin of Satan,—being a spirit, it is almost the only wickedness he can be guilty of; and as, consequently, all that is abominable in the sight of God is produced by this sin, it is peculiarly hateful to him; and he will allow or accept of nothing which is done through its means,—this sin is marked as no other, except the sin of the Holy Ghost, is. There is a twofold mark upon it in the Book of Revelation: first, there is no entrance into the heavenly Jerusalem for the maker of a lie; and, secondly, when those who are hopelessly without it, and guilty of almost nameless crimes, there is classed along with them “whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.” Neither, then, by untruth, injustice, cruelty, or oppression, though they seemed by a miraculous agency to change men into angels, are we to attempt the transformation.

The Church of Rome has long been famous (if it be permissible to use a phrase so moderate) for adopting the principle of the end justifying

the means. Wide and blood-stained is the theatre upon which she has brought it into action; to that unholy principle she owes many a triumph over innocence—many a victory gained by cruelty, many a success, of influence, of arms, of cupidity, of thirst for blood. Whatever serves the cause of the Church is good with her,—sin is no longer a sin if it be employed to promote the interests of the Roman See. The history of the Jesuits is the best commentary upon these assertions which I make. They had but one object at heart; they lived, and learned, and laboured, and died, all in the earnest and anxious pursuit of their one great object. No impediment stood in their way—no man, no government, no system, no influence, no connexion, but could be removed, destroyed, overpowered, or set aside by them. The most unlimited command of means,—the countenance bestowed upon them from the once princely authority of the head of the Papal Church,—their insinuating manners, their learning, the varied accomplishments of these men all brought into full play and action by means of falsehood and intrigue, gave them at one time such a power in most countries of Europe as alarmed their rulers and caused the suppression of their order. The whole system of the Jesuits was to do good by evil as much as by good; they were sworn to devote

themselves entirely to the benefit of their Church, and to think of no other object of desire than how, by whatever means, to promote her advancement,—no falsehood, no duplicity, no concealment of truth or proclamation of error, no employment of discreditable agents, no perjury, no mental reservations, no confusion and perplexity purposely created to be the means of deception, no subtlety and diligence in evil, were ever considered to damage the good they sought to do for their Church. To make black white, and white black; to put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter; this was their element and their delight; and yet after all they themselves, and the fabric which they laboured to maintain, both came to the ground by means of the corruption that was in them, and two nobler bodies never graced the earth than the Jesuits and the Roman Church, when they were each in the zenith of their power and influence—noble in their structure, noble in their professed objects, noble in the extent and aptitude of their machinery, and yet degraded, both by the principles upon which they acted and by the consequences of their conduct—degraded because they did evil that good might come. I have purposely endeavoured to bring the mind to this point because my object is to lead the reader to reflect upon the peculiar importance of acting upon the rule which I have



stated at the present time. At all times it should be present with us, and never should we for a moment think of losing sight of it; but in our opposition to the heretical views which are propounded in the Oxford Tracts, it is a matter of the greatest moment that we should be perfectly clear in all our charges; we should know the foundation of them, and be as nearly as possible aware of all their bearings; if we do not know the position, and the size, and the distance, of the object of our hostility, it is not likely that we can be successful in levelling our aim at it. The writers of the Tracts, and their growing party, have gained the greatest advantage by the confusion and misunderstanding which prevail among those who are opposed to them; these writers, themselves, are exceedingly clear in all their statements, and cannot, I think, be easily misunderstood by such as are careful to find out their meaning. We should never give them room to accuse us of injustice. I have met with writers who have run so blindly against them that they laid at their door the very matters which the Tracts themselves were written to oppose. This was endeavouring to do good by doing evil, nor is it always a safe mode of controversy to assail a system solely on account of its supposed evil consequences, the grounds for apprehending these may or may not be sufficient.

In some minds a magnitude is given to things which others never see in them, more particularly when they are matters which may be classed as speculative, and in this there will be danger of being insensibly led into evil, while it is our sincere desire to promote what is good. It is a much more safe method to try every supposition and every charge first by the test of abstract truth, ascertaining with positive certainty the exact limits and the precise tendency, probable or absolute, of every fact connected with what is supposed or charged; then to bring what is thus defined before the page of Scripture, and find how far it is consonant or opposed thereto; for so entirely are they who hold erroneous principles themselves convinced that a scriptural view of every opinion must be met in these days, that they are compelled to find out some sanction for their doctrine beside the Scriptures. Another evil to be guarded against is, drawing the circle around this new school,\* composed of "members of the University of Oxford," upon a diameter too extended, and enclosing within the circumference others who have errors

\* So the writers of the Tracts designate themselves. It is generally thought, in many places known to the author, that the principles of the peculiar theology of the Tracts have some sanction from Oxford and her various colleges; but so far is this from being given, that the heads of the Universities

peculiar to themselves, and dangerous errors too, but who may be at least disinclined to support, if they be not actually desirous to oppose, the novelties of the system in question. Nor is it at all needful, I presume, to apprehend that this suggestion may be thought to proceed from a wish to palliate aught that is erroneous. All false doctrines, in their place and in a proper way, are to be met with decision; for whatever is beyond God's Word, and not needful for edification, or in any degree opposed to the plain and blessed Gospel, is to be deprecated and rejected. The proposition that we should be careful to include as small a number as strict truth will render possible amongst those who are to be tried for running our ship upon the rocks on a hostile shore, and bringing us over into the hands of the enemy, with scarcely a hope of escape, proceeds from no sympathy with whatever may be unworthy of approval in those not enumerated in that list,

have more than withheld their sanction—even the printers at the University press have given no help in the production of the Tracts; for though they are dated at Oxford, they are printed in London. The inhibition of a clergyman, since this page was sent to the printer, from preaching for two years within the precincts of the University of Oxford, and the admonition of another, in consequence of having each expressed from the pulpit some of the peculiar views of the new theology, is sufficient proof.

which we would rather reduce than multiply, but springs from a lawful anxiety to gather strength on all sides against the unprotestantizers of our fellow-countrymen. Too large a band we cannot gather to unite its force against what threatens so much danger. The rising generation we tremble for: we have no fears for ourselves. Every effort is now made to render Rome attractive; she is lauded for holiness, for self-devotion, for mortification, for all those external graces which twelve centuries have been employed to instruct her in; and she is now brought forth beautified by all these, while inwardly she is full of corruption. And let us not fail to mark this, that she always has attractions far too powerful for the carnal Christian to put easily aside—her imposing services, her mysterious reserve, her human pardons, her opiates for the conscience, her licence for sinning, her universal passports to those who submit to her, have never failed to allure and to betray some to ruin. But now, when they to whom we look for holy counsels, whose office it is to feed the flock in holy pastures, watered by the rain and invigorated by the sun from heaven, are driving it into the barren wilderness or the beaten road, and are drawing their own wisdom from an unholy source, alarm is justly felt. When they who have the Word of Christ put into their hands on

receiving authority to preach, and direction out of that book alone to teach the people committed to them, and exhortation to be diligent to drive away all erroneous opinions, are dealing out in miniature those doctrines which in their enlargement are the very errors they are bound to drive out, the most incredulous are startled. When the advocates of the worst parts of Roman falsehood under the name, though not always under the appearance, of truth, are found among Protestant preachers, it becomes us to awake from our lethargy, and to see that the lambs of the flock be not hopelessly poisoned by those shepherds whose duty it is to refresh them with the pure streams of the waters of life. Let none say the danger is chimerical—it is not. Some of the men themselves have been unable to resist the force of their own impulse towards Rome, it has actually compelled them to enter in.\*

\* The following remarkable passage occurs in Jewell's exposition of the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, on chapter ii., verse 6:—"Antichrist worketh in a mystery. Jerome saith, the whole world mourned and did marvel that they were possessed with the error of Arius; that they denied the divinity of Christ before they were aware. This was a mystery. So shall the learned and wise be deceived; they shall honour Antichrist unawares; they shall say, we defy him and detest him, yet shall fall down and worship him. He shall mingle poison with the wholesome food of our souls so closely and

The history of the Tractarians, and the influence of their doctrine, may be harmless with a generation now grown up and more instructed and strengthened in Christian knowledge than any which ever yet preceded it in England; but there is clearly, at this moment, the utmost danger lest the advancing generation be tinctured with these false principles. One reason for apprehending this has

subtly that it shall hardly be espied; he shall go forward by little and little, and so win credit and convey himself into the hearts of the people. This mystery began in the days of the apostles, and continues on still unto our time: it is still in work. But who are they that shall follow his love? who yield themselves to him, and who shall be deceived? Are they poor men, or artificers, or labourers? or are they unlearned and ignorant men? No, no; he shall deceive priests, bishops, archbishops, princes, kings, emperors, the gravest, the most learned, the wisest, the mightiest in the world. He shall blind their eyes and amaze their hearts. They shall run to him out of all parts of the earth; they shall fall down before him; they shall ask counsel of him; they shall say, Thou art the doctor of doctors, thou art the father of fathers, thou art the comfort of the Church, thou art the light of the world, thou art most holy; all law and knowledge is hid in thy breast; we beseech thy Holiness shew us thy way; expound thou the law unto us; teach us how we may be saved; thou hast the key of knowledge; thy word is the word of truth; so shall they creep to Antichrist; so shall they pour out their souls before him; so shall they seek counsel at his mouth; so shall they fetch light at the prince of darkness." Such were the words of Jewell, who was born 321 years ago.

weighed very much in my mind. The greater part of the year in which the Tracts first appeared I passed in England, with introductions which gave me access to every grade of society in many parts of that noble country, and since that period I have enjoyed more than common opportunities of knowing the progress of the new opinions amongst the more youthful portion of society in the Universities, in the Church, and in the families of the upper classes generally, and my conviction is, that literature has done more for the advancement of those opinions than theology. If this be a right conjecture—and right or wrong I now deal with it as if it were my own, having never heard it stated by another until I had first advanced it—I deem it to be of the utmost importance that an effort should be made to meet, on classic and poetic ground, an influence which is of acknowledged prevalence. There seems not to be the smallest ground of doubt that to the genius of authorship in the “Christian Year,” far more than to the reasonings in the able “Lectures on Justification,”\* the new theologians of whom I speak are indebted for a large majority of their disciples among the youth of England. I had analyzed with great care the manifold scheme of justification, anticipating

\* The most important book, perhaps, of all produced by any single writer of the Tracts is, “Lectures on Justification, by the Rev. J. H. Newman. London, 1828.”

many intellectual skirmishes upon the substantial peculiarities then coming out; but, to my no small surprise, I found that my attainments in these mysteries were considered exceedingly shallow by "young men and maidens, old men and children," who were not, as in the good old days of the Psalmist "praising the name of the Lord," but repeating passages of poetry, no small part of whose beauty consisted in admired and unsafe allusions to the Blessed Virgin, and to the Church of her worshippers.

The Tracts were seldom read, and still more seldom bought; and similar was the fate of sermons and pamphlets, auxiliary to them; but lighter works in prose and verse were making deep impressions. For these reasons, I fear for the advancing generation, and for their sake I deem it right to warn parents in the present day who may read these essays of the danger of doing evil both by incautiously including among the favourers of falsehood those who may not be guilty, and by omitting to supply their children, as they grow up, with that class of religious books which will convey spiritual truth, not in the dulness and harshness of controversy, but in the sweetness and persuasiveness always to be found in Christian poetry and biography when founded on Gospel principles, and in ecclesiastical history on the model of Milner.



It is customary with some to include, as participators in all the blame of the heresy, every clergyman whose views of religious truth are not thought to be strictly according to the statements of St. Paul, more particularly on the subject of works, and who may attach more importance to ceremonies and ordinances than seems to be reconcilable with free salvation. The tendency of this is evil in many ways. First, it is unjust to a large class of men who themselves resist the Oxford views strongly: it mitigates the poison of those views by mixing them up with a less offensive system, and so prevents them from being seen in the distinctness of their peculiar and unhappy tendency; and, again, it gives them the influence of many distinguished names, and proportionately diminishes the supporters of truth; besides all which, it operates injuriously upon youthful minds, and renders it difficult for them to understand the subject clearly. It is doing evil that good may come; and it ought to be remembered that, while we may unite with all who will protest against a doctrine that is unsound, we are in no way pledged to be of one mind with them on other points, nor are they with us, and when they who are often widely separated on doctrinal matters concur in a condemnation of a third party, the censure has the greater weight. Had not this essay already

proceeded somewhat further than was intended, I should gladly have thrown out, at some length, my wish that a few Christian poets would come forth to serve the cause of truth, and exemplify the way of doing good, by transferring from their portfolios many a gem of Christian sentiment, which by a false modesty now shuns the light. What a noble field for the author of *Luther* to come down, for a time, from his magnificent flights, and skim along the surface in some light excursion of his muse!\*

\* The unusual fertility of imagination, and powers of composition displayed in "*Luther*," have within the present year carried it into a third edition. Besides its merit as a poem, it is a theological work likely to attract a greater number of cultivated minds to an appreciation of pure religion than any book of the present day: The principles of Gospel truth, as they animated the spirit of Luther and the Reformers generally, were, from the first, splendidly illustrated in that work of genius, and the manner in which its author has availed himself of the suggestions of some of his reviewers has, in the estimation of all good men, dignified him more than even his high capabilities. Whether a mitigation of some of its more severe passages might not materially increase the effect of future editions, and secure a still greater number of readers for this the most generally read, perhaps, of any living writer's productions at the present day, is worthy of consideration from one who has proved himself to be far above the vanity that will hear of no friendly criticism with equanimity.

## REPENTANCE.

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God rightly understood through repentance.—The distinction between godly sorrow and the sorrow of the world.—Religion, if not practical, worse than no religion.—Sorrow not repentance.—True sorrow for sin from God only.—It leads to enduring and effectual repentance.—The impossibility of salvation without repentance.—All moved to repentance by the Spirit of God.—The delay of repentance.

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No one has ever yet had, or can have, any saving knowledge of God, except through repentance. When the mind has formed the correct idea of God, and of his method of bringing the sinner to life and holiness, it submits to an influence from Deity producing sorrow which differs entirely in its character and operation from those natural feelings of regret which spring up in the mind on every new circumstance of the troubles of life. There is often a compunction and a distress that agonizes the heart, and makes it tremble at the prospect before it. It pictures to itself the withdrawal of God's favour, the ruin of the soul, the

tears of angels, the sorrows of the redeemed; it imagines the rejoicing of Satan and his associates in the work of evil over the almost undone man; it forgets the world; it forgets man; it is transplanted to times and scenes connected with another world; it contemplates eternity; it quivers at the thought. A retrospective view is taken of its own sin, and it shudders to think of what has been paid for its enjoyments. More or less of such feelings as these there will be in every one whose sorrow for sin is a sincere and godly sorrow. What mental distress we sometimes feel when we discover that we have done what will grieve and offend some kind and invaluable friend; or omitted to do what justice and gratitude, to say nothing of affection, demanded of us! The Gospel, when rightly understood and received in power, makes a sinner tender-hearted and sensitive; its earliest effect is to make us feel, and that acutely, what a sad offence it is to have deliberately indulged in sin, so hated and denounced by God. Effectual and permanent repentance is thus produced. There is a very important distinction laid down in Scripture, upon which a due and sufficient consideration of this subject must always depend. We are to distinguish between "godly sorrow" and "the sorrow" of the world. God and the world are

ever in contrast throughout the sacred writings. The fact of their being thus contrasted renders man's life a scene of probation. It would be no trial of our faith and constancy to live in the world, if the world were in nowise exalted against God. Because the world is thus opposed to God, every day of man's life is full of temptation. We call that conduct and those feelings or principles godly which are marked by a decided resistance to all that is either positively bad or doubtful; and we affirm that to be of the world, or worldly, which makes fashion, or popularity, or selfishness, or what some imagine is good sense, to be the arbiter instead of God. Godly sorrow is the sorrow that God approves of—the sorrow that springs from a knowledge of what God is, and of what he requires in us. When we reflect upon the holiness of God, and his hatred of sin, and only then, we will have real sorrow for our transgressions; till then our sorrow is not godly sorrow. Until we examine scrupulously the letter of God's law, and how he has there, as well as in his holy Gospel, expressed his Divine will upon the subject of transgression, we must remain unable to appreciate godly sorrow. Sorrow for sin, to be godly, must have substantial claims to the name by which it is called; it must be actual grief on right grounds; it must be a sorrow that will set us at work for God;

it must be in the highest sense practical sorrow. The whole of our religion must be practical, or it is worse than nothing. Religion is principle illustrated and enforced by practice; it is God received in faith and honoured in godliness. Religion must not only be something to know, and to think of, and to speak of, but it must be something to feel, and to handle, and to taste, and to do; something that goes immeasurably beyond words and mere professions, and that will leave the bare professor to be the heir of shame and everlasting contempt; something that will stand the test of God's scrutiny in judgment. Practical religion founds everything on God. In practical religion everything begins, continues, and ends in God. Godly sorrow is sorrow in which God is throughout regarded; it is sorrow on God's account; it is, if possible to be understood, that sorrow for sin is required more on God's account than on our own. Sorrow for sin, we might almost say, is only allowable because sin offends God. Sorrow for sin, on any other ground, would perhaps itself be a sin. Most certainly, sorrow for sin, merely on account of its bringing ourselves into what we feel to be painful, or disgraceful, or perilous circumstances, in the sight of God or man, would partake more of the nature of a sin than of a virtue. Sorrow, to be entitled to be called godly,

must not only spring from a sense of positive damage done to the interests of the soul, but from a deep compunction for having grieved the Holy Spirit of God by our sins. Sorrow, to be godly, must depress the heart and work upon the conscience. Sorrow, to be godly, must look for solace to the Almighty; to hear him say, by his ineffable consolations, Be still, and know that I am God; and to feel our sorrow then, and only then giving way to joy, is the best proof that it is sorrow which is felt for God's sake. Now the sorrow which realizes this description will undoubtedly produce repentance unto salvation not to be repented of. Sorrow and repentance are, however, in the popular mind, most frequently supposed to be the same thing. If sorrow only were repentance, it were easy to repent. What more easy than to shed a tear? What more easy than to make a loud lamentation? Sorrow is a passing away of pleasurable feelings and a succession of their opposites. It may exist where there is no alteration of principles or character; and if so, when the feelings find their level it will subside, and the man will be the same he ever was. But repentance does not consist in feelings, although it brings them forth, and expresses itself very often by them; it is a revolution in the mind, not a mere tumult in one or more of the passions.

It is the rejection of an old and the adoption of a new dominion within; and although, like all great changes, more or less of a shock will follow, yet as repentance is the consequence of a chastisement from God's Spirit, inflicted upon our own to bring us to God, to experience the tokens of his love, it soon yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness, inasmuch as it ushers us into the precincts of faith and holiness, so that we speedily come to the privileges of God's kingdom, which are "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." Then the man, though first cast down, may be truly said to be raised up; and being raised up, he is, by God's grace, kept standing upon a foundation altogether new. Repentance is a change of heart, a change of mind, a change of life. Sorrow may be caused by a loss of temporal and trivial things: repentance can be caused by nothing but the deepest conviction of sin. Sorrow may proceed from causes which have no concern with God: repentance can come from God alone. At the very best, sorrow is but the prelude to repentance.

When God is thus concerned with the sinner's sorrow, it cannot be unavailing; it is the greatest blessing he can meet; it will as assuredly produce repentance as the seed-time and harvest will bring forth food for man and beast. And, oh, what a



change it leads to! It is the opening out of that great work, the work of grace in man's soul, that is at once so great a wonder and a mercy so inestimable! And it is not merely that such a thing as genuine repentance is barely produced, but that its genuineness consists in a consolidation of many noble qualities. It is solid; it is effectual; it is permanent; it is more—it is repentance that will not only give imperishable evidences of its power and excellency, but will produce to him in whom it has taken place enduring satisfaction. This is the meaning of "repentance not to be repented of;" it will always justify itself to his mind, and prevent him from ever feeling regret that it has produced its influences upon him; nay, it will always fill its possessor with the most grateful sense of God's mercy in calling him to it. Thus it leads to something like that feeling of complacency which fills the Divine mind when contemplating the benefits conferred on man.

Now if the argument be just, that because true sorrow for sin is from God, it must produce active, solid, effectual repentance, we are all nearly concerned in ascertaining whether our repentance be from God, if indeed we are conscious of repentance at all, or think we are. If any man say he is a child of God, he must remember, that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; that he is at

all times flying from sin, resisting sin, hating sin. What is this, then, but repenting? Repentance is forsaking sin on Gospel principles. Even the established Christian must be always repenting; because, in the hour that he finds himself unwilling to forsake sin, he makes the discovery that he is not what he supposed himself to be. If I be conscious of no such thing as this repentance; if I feel persuaded in my own mind that I am not now forsaking sin, and that I never have resolved to forsake sin, what can I say if any man bring before me the words of my God and Judge, as written by his chosen servant, "Whosoever sinneth hath not seen him nor known him;" so that he who has not repented has not seen nor known God? What language could sufficiently express the details of so sad a condition? If, therefore, it be argued that because sorrow for sin comes from God, it must produce sound repentance, I am bound to see to it, with fear and trembling, what manner of repentance mine is; I am to satisfy myself, and that upon the clearest testimonies to be drawn from God's Word and from my own state, that it is thorough repentance. Unless I feel my mind and soul distressed for every transgression that memory retains and conscience lays to my charge; unless my repentance apply itself to the multitude of those thoughts, and to the variety of those acts,

which must have been offensive to heaven, and apply itself with a pungency and severity that leaves no room to doubt that it is a powerful movement within ; unless my repentance carry its alarms and its convictions, its investigations and resolutions, so far as to exercise itself on account of the smallest transgression with as much anxiety and humiliation, as much prayer and hope, as the greatest (for he that offends in one point is guilty of all), I have not fulfilled the requisitions of the Gospel. This indispensable repentance is of very abundant and various produce, and the hue and complexion of its fruits will take their form and colouring from the cast and shade of our past life. According as his life of ungodliness has been, the penitent, when he comes to God, has a wide field of duty. Have I injured any by thought, word, or deed? Have I spoken ill of any? Have I envied any? Have I hated any without a cause? Have I ever smitten my neighbour secretly? Have I in any way defrauded, overreached, or otherwise injured my neighbour? Have I suffered malice or revenge to influence me? If so, and if I be conscious that I have not repented, so long as I remain without that repentance, is it too much for me to fear, that the power of God forbids itself to save me? Though all things are possible with God, there are some things which God has

unalterably refused to do, and therefore these have been rendered impossible by the Almighty's power of doing all things, and one of these is salvation without repentance. I may fix it in my mind as a truth that eternity will witness to, that it is no more possible for a man to be saved without repentance, than that the happiness of heaven should be unbroken if the devil and his angels were brought into the midst of it. Salvation without repentance, and that, too, such a repentance as will set us at work to undo our evil as far as it is capable of being undone, or we have time and opportunity allowed, I have no hesitation in believing, upon the authority of the Bible, is utterly impossible, except indeed we are to build our hopes on a succession of repentances following upon a succession of long revolts from God. Again, if I think I have repented, and if I have left the work of restitution and making such amends as are possible for all injuries and wrongs done by me to any other, in their mind, body, or estate, all undone and disregarded, or in any degree unheeded, in which I might have attended to them, all my religion is corrupt, and it will come up in the sight of our holy God and Judge as a fearful abomination. There is no form of self-deception more awful than taking it for granted that we are converted, when we have

never done works meet for repentance. The religion of Jesus Christ is not a thing gilded over with professions, convictions, persuasions, frames, hopes, and feelings, while a mass of unrenewed nature, concealed within, is clothed in these disguises, and is working secretly and unresistedly either to induce or to permit the existence or the exercise of propensities to evil, which, though unperceived by man, are yet plain and open to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do, and from whom no secrets are hid, and which will leave us in a state of deplorable inconsistency and confusion if we so appear at the bar of judgment. The doctrines of grace are not without, but they are within; they are foundations laid by God in the heart; they are God living in the soul; they are the word of reconciliation taking effect in the conscience; they are faith and hope purifying us, even as the Lord Jesus himself is pure; they may be put on as a cloak, or they may be assumed under the influence of self-deception; but if my own knowledge do not testify to me, upon the clearest evidences, that every evil motive and desire, as regards myself or others, is repressed, and the most unquestioned disinterestedness, ingenuousness, and benevolence eagerly and unremittingly sought after by me, and reduced to practice in my daily life, and an anxiety also felt to search out

with painful care whatever may have been omitted or neglected, either through forgetfulness, or the sluggishness of our nature, or an unwillingness to come forward fearlessly to undo the evil or to repair the injustice which I may have been guilty of, whether openly or concealedly, I cannot honestly believe myself to have repented; I am still in my sins, and they are only made the more glaring by my unholy assumptions. If I would exhibit a picture of a penitent under the Gospel, and delineate the features of his character accurately and faithfully, I dare not adopt those notions of penitence which will make the whole matter of returning to God so easy as to have no difficulty, so pleasing to human nature as to cause no revoltings of the mind, no sense of pain within, no rebellion of the whole nature, no resistance of the whole man. I am not permitted to content myself with a representation of the sorrow of the world; that sorrow leaves our worldly attachments and predilections unchanged; it has its origin in worldly feelings; it can be allayed and removed by worldly consolations; it has the seemings of propriety, and often assumes the cloak of religion, and even where no hypocrisy is intended, it is, through the ignorance of the sorrower, often mistaken for somewhat of religion; it has no sympathy with heaven-bound hearts; it

cannot express itself in spiritual language, although superstitious fear will sometimes induce an attempt, or create a wish, to do so—it always has its birth in some temporal calamity or disgrace, and always ends when that terminates. We could not say of it that it is not to be repented of. Its fruits are bitter, if it only regard our losses, or disgraces, or inconveniences; its very selfishness is a sin, and subjects us to the condemnation of death; it makes us reproach God for his dispensations towards us; it worketh death. This ungodly sorrow, when men have failed in their hopes and speculations, has plunged the world into ten thousand miseries, and the conduct of men who act upon it has been often the ruin both of body and soul. Led by it, they have rushed into scenes of folly and dissipation; nay, they have flung their lives in the face of God, the author and giver of them, stung by despair, which is no uncommon offspring of worldly sorrow. But though this may be an extreme view of the subject, yet, even in what many may feel disposed to call its milder and more harmless forms, it fails to produce the fruit of godly sorrow. It partakes in no degree of what is holy, and so can effect no holy purposes. It cannot give life; death, therefore, is the only alternative. I must, then, paint the Gospel penitent in other

colours than can be borrowed from the representations of this sorrow of the world. If I examine the devotions of holy men in Scripture and in the ages subsequent to Scripture times, I find them all abounding in the language and spirit of repentance. Could we summon before us the scenes of devotion in which our great Reformers took their part, or could we hear the supplications of the best servants of God in all ages, we should find them speaking in the tones of repentance. Wherever the indwelling Spirit of God is, there is to be seen unintermitting penitence. He that dwells in the high and holy place, even the Lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, He dwells also with him that is of an humble and contrite spirit, He revives the spirit of the humble, He cheers the heart of the contrite ones; yea, He gives his special blessing to the poor in spirit, and that a marked and a distinguished blessing. In analyzing the beatitudes, we see that they who are poor in spirit, and they who are persecuted for righteousness sake, are the only persons of whom it is said that theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Every prayer we offer must come from us as penitents; I acknowledge my transgression, and my sin is ever before me; and unless we mark this language by the emphasis of our conduct, it will openly condemn us. Now, as prayer



is a duty of every day, as the spirit of prayer is a state of mind that is of every moment, and as the humble, penitent, and contrite heart is a requisite and a qualification for prayer, the conclusion is that repentance is the constant state of all believers. But may not some doubt whether they can repent and be accepted of God? I do not deem myself unwarranted in saying that if any man have this fear, that very fact goes far towards proving that he has no cause to fear. If I am instructed in the principles of religion as contained in the Bible, and if, on desiring to have the benefit of them, I have at once a wish to be accepted of God, and a doubt whether or not I am worthy of acceptance. I must have a troubled and an anxiously exercised spirit. I could not have such a wish and fear combined without sincere and deep-felt sorrow for sin; without high and worthy conceptions of heaven; without setting its due value on my immortal soul; without deeming salvation precious; without love for God; without a belief in the forgiveness of sins through the merits of Christ; and if I have all this, I have every requisite for acceptance. Why then should I doubt? Why should I fear? Am I not precisely in the condition in which I ought to be before coming to Christ—wearied and heavily-laden with my sins? I should no longer doubt.

or fear. I should remember that I am actually repenting, and that if I follow up the suggestions which the Holy Spirit has created within me, though I were to die to-night, I may be in heaven to-morrow; but if by delays I suffer Satan to quicken my doubts, and raise greater apprehensions of rejection, it is possible I may put away repentance to-day, and lift up my eyes in hell to-morrow in great torment! But even though I may meet with no such casualty as a sudden death, I may bring on inevitable ruin by persevering to delay repentance. The history of these delays is this, that they almost all end in hardened impenitence. The heart that closes itself against religion at twenty, thirty, or forty, is most unlikely to embrace it afterwards. Habitual disregard of God will create an incapacity for loving him. The longer I defer, the more difficult the work of repentance becomes. But there is one danger for which, if the thing befall me, there is no remedy. God is continually inviting me to repentance, and that not alone by outward calls, such as the admonitions of preachers, the advice of friends, the power of examples, the course of my own search for knowledge, but by those inward movements which are never wanting to man, and which, while they leave all without excuse, yet prove that the first risings of religion in the soul are from

the will of God himself, inasmuch as no one is able to turn from the ways of nature to the ways of grace till these take place in him. But God may be provoked by my obstinacy, or apathy, or by my open rebellion, and in the day I choose to repent, it is possible he may choose to harden my heart; in the day I may desire to pray, he may resolve not to hear me. How awful to defer repentance! Why should I run the risk of dying impenitent? Why should I provoke God's patience and loving-kindness? Why should I strive against my own mercies? Why should I despise my opportunities? Why should I wound my friends? Why should I grieve those who watch for my soul? Why should I any longer forget and violate my baptismal vow, disregard the Bible, refuse to follow wise and edifying examples, deify sin, count the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, and do despite unto the Spirit of Grace?

## THE TESTIMONY OF THE FATHERS.

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The admixture of Truth and Error in the "Tracts for the Times."—The rule of Faith.—Vincent of Lerens.—No general Unanimity in the Fathers.—Caution of the Church of England in not sanctioning them as Guides.—Not fit for general Perusal.—The Writings of the Fathers and of the Schoolmen were destroying Religion at the Time of the Reformation.

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THERE are very few, if any, of the more prominent parts of theology advocated in the "Tracts for the Times," which are not so intermixed with matters of truth and certainty, that there is some danger lest a faithful attempt to analyse that system might be misunderstood. An anxious effort scrupulously to put apart, on the one hand the truth, and on the other hand the error, might be attended with suspicions. A desire to preserve every portion of the truth might be thought to indicate a predilection for somewhat of the error. The nature of that system so ably and so perseveringly supported by the writers of the Tracts is such as to give them one great ad-

vantage over almost all opponents. They avow a determined hostility to the Church of Rome; they distinctly declare that an union with her as she is, is never to be expected: yet, in many of their statements of doctrine in which they endeavour to approach the tenets of the Roman Church, they seem altogether driven from the moorings of moderation, and that in a way which strikingly shews that they feel themselves permitted either to interpret our formularies as favouring Romanism, or to go beyond them and distinctly and separately from them to found a sort of traditional supplement to our doctrines. The establishment of this secondary standard of doctrines never yet authoritatively acknowledged, would, if fully carried out, eventually place matters in such a position, as that while the Church of England had really departed from her views and actually sacrificed principle, the Church of Rome might, by a nominal, and perhaps in some minor matters, a real concession, accomplish at last what she has so long and ardently laboured for, our reconciliation to her; and in an endeavour to bring this about consists what is peculiar to the Tractarian school. They differ from the authors of all preceding systems in occupying this new ground. Their middle path,\* as they term it (however they may

\* "Tracts for the Times," No. 3, vol. i.

seem to think), is not the same as the elder and somewhat better notion of a half-way house, and this is evident from the singular fact, that what was formerly the centre now lies at the circumference ; and they have sought not so much to make the Church of England a midway station between the extremes of Reformation and the dogmas of Rome, as to erect between these latter and the Church of England herself, a tower of compromise built in more close vicinity to the Romish than to the English confines ; and that by aid of their notions of the Fathers, and their views of tradition generally. They allow the Prayer-book, indeed, and they have written against its alteration in any particulars,\* but they elsewhere argue, that above and beside the Prayer-book, there is a field of doctrine which they may cultivate. In this they are in a very obvious manner at issue, more particularly as relates to the Thirty-nine Articles, with the declaration of the King prefixed to them ; for whereas they have asserted that they were only articles of unity, that declaration affirms that the Articles of the Church of England "do contain the true doctrine of the Church of England, agreeable to God's Word." Now, all this put together gives them a great advantage with the bulk of mankind, more espe-

\* "Tracts for the Times," No. 3, vol. i.

cially when we consider how gladly most men would embrace a system which, at the same time, protests against Popery in words, meeting it with arguments from the Fathers and from the Scriptures, and from general literature, and from common sense, and yet embraces in disguise the very essence of that destructive system after which there is so much craving in the superstitious and sensual man, and which is but the old way of the Pharisees and of the more enlightened Heathens, put forth under a Christian name and in a Christian dress. And indeed when we review the whole course of this movement at Oxford, it is difficult for us, however charitably disposed we may be, to satisfy ourselves that they with whom it originated, have kept in mind what the document prefixed to the Articles of which I have already made mention, has expressed in these words:—"We hold it," said his Majesty, "most agreeable to this our kingly office, and our own religious zeal, to conserve and maintain the Church committed to our charge, in the unity of true religion, and in the bond of peace; and not to suffer unnecessary disputations, altercations, or questions to be raised, which may nourish faction both in the Church and commonwealth."

The motives of the authors of the Tracts I cannot possibly know, nor do I conceive it to be

of much moment, except to themselves what they may be ; the effect of their views is the principal matter for Christians to consider. The consistent and unintermitting hostility which the Church of Rome has ever manifested to the admission of true light into the human mind ; how she hates spirituality ; how she would prostrate reason, destroy liberty, drive out the naked letter of Scripture from popular use, and buffet man's conscience, his heart, his piety, into a conformity to the tyrant ordinances of spiritual wickedness in high places, spoiling them of that liberty which can only be where the Spirit of the Lord, not the spirit of man is ; these instruct us to feel satisfied that our Reformers were wise in stopping short of Rome where they did stop, and in placing a barrier such as they raised between her and us. Their principle was, she must conform to us, not we to her : she must change, not we. Error must be given up for truth, not truth modelled to meet the prejudices, or overstatements, or mistakes, or arts, or bigotry of error. The Scriptures are the rule of faith with Protestants ; oral tradition is the rule of faith with Rome ; and she binds her people to what has been declared by the unanimous consent of the Fathers. The Fathers must yield to Scripture, the Scripture cannot give way to the Fathers. How then can there be a reconciliation ? The Church of Rome



always boasts herself unchangeable ;—if indeed there be such a thing as the unanimous consent of the Fathers upon the whole or upon any separate part of Christianity, it is hard to comprehend how there could be a difference of opinion as to what side of the great questions of controversy between the Churches of England and Rome the unanimity lies upon. The very fact of its being disputed whether there is such an unanimity almost amounts to a proof that it does not exist. But with that point I have no immediate concern. Supposing, then, that there is such an unanimous consent, and that it is in favour of Rome, in what other way can a reconciliation be effected than by our being moved over from the Scriptures to the Fathers? That there is an unanimous consent of the authors of the books of the canonical Scriptures is enough for us. To this consent we appeal, and not to any consent, however general or however unanimous, of mere uninspired men, as to the exposition of Scripture. I cannot consent to be tied even by the rule\* of Vincentius of Lerens, which is so largely relied on by the writers of the Tracts as a sound test of heresy, except that I would apply it to Scripture writers alone. He seems to think that we are safe if we only receive what has been received “always,

\* Quod semper quod ubique quod ab omnibus.—See “Tracts for the Times,” vol. ii. “Records of the Church,” Nos. 24 and 25.

everywhere, and by all." It appears to me that this law of judgment upon heresy will not bear investigation. It is true the descriptions given of it set it off to great advantage. It is described to mean "that, and that only, which the Catholic Church is known to have held everywhere from the beginning."\* But while there is no dispute among Protestants as to which are canonical writers of the Scripture, there is an undecided dispute as to what the Catholic Church is, so that new difficulties are created on every hand by this rule of Vincentius. The authors and the Churches who are most opposed to Rome are scarcely, if at all, allowed a place within the Catholic Church. So that while this law has Catholicity to the ear, the hope is never gratified by its realization, because they who make the law create its limitations, and make rather an illogical change from the universal to a few particulars than a Catholic axiom. They begin by speaking of the Catholic Church, but they proceed by excluding from membership in it almost a majority of professing Christians.† But even though this difficulty did not exist, yet the

\* "Tracts for the Times." "Records of the Church," No. 25, vol. ii.

† See a very remarkable note in page 5 of the Tract referred to above, in which is contained an admission alluded to in page 189.

bare rule itself seems open to some objection, more especially when we find that it is to be employed to force us into a compliance with what we do not see approved by the sanction and impress of scriptural truth. There would not be room for its formal examination in the present essay, which is not intended as suggesting to the mind more than a view of the use which may legitimately be made of the testimony of those writers who are called the Fathers ; but it may be observed of it in a cursory manner, that it seems to place the truth in the hands of man and to remove it from the custody of God. It is like taking the word of the testimony from the ark, and giving it into hands which have no right to touch it. Supposing that the Catholic Church had been unanimous from the beginning in supporting the simple and manifest statements of the Scriptures, without any additions or admixtures of whatever sort ; \* gratifying as that fact would be, it could, I conceive, be used for very little further purpose than to serve as a pleasing and consolatory circumstance, a matter of truth exhibiting as testi-

\* To speak in a word, there was scarce any one Article of our faith which in the first ages of Christianity was not traversed by some heresy, or that met not with some contradiction amongst Christians themselves.—*L'Arroque*, as translated by Walker. London, 1684, p. 310.

mony honourable to man, that God had been glorified by an obedience to his Word; but I deem it very questionable indeed, whether we should be justified in venturing to think that any additional authority, weight, or sanction was given thereby to God's Word. The principle that such support could thus be given by man to his Maker is pre-eminently Romish, and is to be rejected, not as though we were to set aside all that is acknowledged in the Church of Rome, but because we renounce her inventions as things which for twelve hundred years after the Christian era were undiscovered in Scripture, and unknown in the practice of men who were guided by the Scripture within the Church of God, of which this is one. And here it seems to me not unfair to remark, that the writers for the "Tracts for the Times" have fallen into an error, not unlike one which they are most ready to charge upon others. It would not, I think, be a weak retort from those who are assailed by them for differing with them upon the nature and extent of the apostolical commission, and who for that are charged with guilt as great as brands the memory of Corah or of Samaria, if they were to lay at the door of the Tractarians a higher order of criminality of the same kind, inasmuch as they might, upon grounds at least equally substantial, charge them with a spirit and a practice which would

dictate severe, if not impious language towards those who were greater than even the priests of God, against whom Corah's company and Gerizim's temple swelled. Ye take too much upon you, ye holy men of old, who spake as ye were moved by the Holy Ghost! and though this language may seem strong, yet do I deem it better justified, upon the principles laid down by themselves,\* than any of their own severe expressions.

As to the matter, then, of the Fathers, there is more to be said than volumes would contain; it would be a cruel bondage to compel the Christian to gather up the grains of Christian verity which are scattered through the chaffy speculations and mystical extravagancies of many who are called holy Fathers. It is not to be denied that the study of these writings is both essential to the student of ecclesiastical history who resolves to judge for himself, rather than to walk upon the crutches of general opinion, or of particular prejudice, either of which he must trust to if he explore not by his own careful investigations, and both which he must very much distrust if he do: to the general inquirer nothing can be more instructive, as an expositor of the workings of the human mind, and as a witness to attest what mankind always is, than these works; they show the power

\* "Tracts for the Times," No. 61 (ad Clerum).

and the weakness of the human intellect; they exhibit brilliancy of thought, devotion of spirit, investigation, industry, fearlessness in the assertion, and resolution in the defence of what was believed and advocated by their authors, but these were not unaccompanied with alloy: the brilliant thought did not always deign to be measured by sober Scripture statement, but sometimes led the way to being wise above what is written; the devotion of spirit which is often apparent under the highest pressure of distressing and contrasting circumstances, too frequently borrowed a superstitious complexion. Investigation was often dedicated to subjects unworthy of it: fearlessness and resolution would sometimes have been deemed inopportune, had they always remembered that there are scenes in which even angels may not dare to tread, much as they desire to look into these things. For these and further reasons the Church of England has ever been most jealous and most cautious respecting the Fathers: she has made no mention whatever of their authority in her Thirty-nine Articles of religion, she has passed them over in remarkable silence in these documents which are believed by the Tractarians to have been intended as "a basis of union in a particular Church,"\* and in which, consequently, were they of that authority

\* "Tracts for the Times," No. 61 (ad Clerum).

which some would attribute to them, we might expect to find them lauded, considering that such reliance was placed upon them at the Reformation by the Romanists. She seems moreover designedly to have contrasted them with the sacred writers in the Tenth Homily (of the second book), "on the reverent estimation of God's Word;" a discourse in which a line of observation is taken in reference to this subject, which, if it proceeded from any private pen, would in these days be considered very derogatory to the high claims of the Church, and savouring of low and unworthy views; but the more we scrupulously investigate the sentiments of the Reformers, the more reason will we perceive for assuring ourselves that they who love most to follow the simplicity of Scripture, and to assert its power and dignity in the conversion and direction of man and the daily teaching of Christian doctrine, may also feel satisfied that they do not thereby evidence any disloyal feeling towards the Church to which they belong, the English Church as she is, was, we may say, cradled in the hands of the Reformers; they were not the children of the Fathers, but they were the children of the Prophets and of the Evangelists, and when they mentioned the Fathers and the Scriptures together, they rejected the one, while they adopted and

recommended the other as the proper teachers of religion, although, when occasion served, even in the very writings from which the testimony now to be adduced is taken, they quoted the Fathers when they supplied a happy exposition or a felicitous expression; as we should now quote any able writer of our own or of other times, without an idea that his language possessed more authority than that of any individual author, or that all his opinions were adopted by us; wherefore, says the second book of Homilies (Homily the Tenth, at the commencement), "Satan, our enemy, seeing the Scriptures to be the very mean, and right way, to bring the people to the true knowledge of God, and that Christian religion is greatly furthered by diligent hearing and reading of them; he also perceiving what a hindrance and let they be to him and to his kingdom, doth what he can to drive them out of God's Church. And for that end he hath always stirred up, in one place or other, cruel tyrants, sharp persecutors, and extreme enemies unto God and his infallible truth, to pull with violence the holy Bibles out of the people's hands; and have most spitefully destroyed and consumed the same to ashes in the fire, pretending, most untruly, that the much hearing and reading of God's Word is an occasion of heresy and carnal liberty, and the overthrow of all



good order in all well-ordered commonweals;" and further on, the same page expresses the opinion of the Reformers as to the comparative value of the Fathers, in words which require no explanation : "And shall we, Christian men, think to learn the knowledge of God and of ourselves in any earthly man's work or writing, sooner or better than in the Holy Scriptures, written by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost? the Scriptures were not brought unto us by the will of man; but holy men of God, as witnesseth St. Peter, spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit of God. The Holy Ghost is the schoolmaster of truth, which leadeth his scholars, as our Saviour saith of him, into all truth. And whoso is not led and taught by this schoolmaster, cannot but fall into deep error; how godly soever his pretence is, what knowledge and learning soever he hath of all other works and writings, or how fair soever a show or face of truth he hath in the estimation and judgment of the world." This extract I do not wish to throw into a note, although perhaps it ought to have been given in that shape; it is a powerful and lucid, as it is an unquestionably authentic declaration of the letter and spirit of the Church of England on the subject under consideration, and it condemns in the plainest and most forcible manner every man who attempts to substitute the

Church or the Fathers for the Word of God. This has been most ably shown by one of whom it has been said by no ordinary judge, that in the controversies with the Roman Church, immediately after the Restoration, "no man bare a greater share," or "succeeded in it with more honour."\* He shows, in treating of oral tradition, that the Fathers themselves did not believe in any such principle as that the unanimous consent of their mutual opinion was the test of Divine truth, but that the rule of faith was Holy Scripture, and this he maintains by different arguments. Indeed had it been the persuasion of the Reformers that the Fathers were a mine of golden truth without alloy, it had been almost folly that they should have laboured to produce the Book of Homilies for the purpose of being read in Churches as they did, declaring that it was needful "to avoid the manifold enormities which heretofore by false doctrine have crept into the Church

\* "Another evidence that Christians in all ages since the apostles' times have owned the Scriptures for the rule of their faith, is, that the Fathers in their Homilies did use constantly to declare to the people, what they were to believe and what they were to practise, out of the Scriptures, which had been most absurd and senseless had they believed not the Scriptures, but something else, to have been the rule of faith and manners."  
—*Bishop Stillingfleet's Answer to Mr. I. S.* London, 1676.

of God;” and because “great inconveniences might arise, and ignorance still be maintained, if some honest remedy be not speedily found and provided” \* for the prevailing ignorance even of preachers: they would have resorted to the Fathers themselves; and that the people might be assured of their unanimous consent, they would have had them read in the congregation; but no, the Homilies are set forth, and although they use the Fathers as credible witnesses to facts and matters of ecclesiastical history generally, and often draw from them a gem of Christianity; although they concede to many of them the title of holy, and learned, and godly Fathers, and use their evidence to represent the state of the Church in matters both of discipline and doctrine; yet are they always most cautious, first, to set down by itself the testimony of God’s Word, on all the subjects of their discussion and writings; and then, before adding human evidence, to give this caution, “Our Saviour Christ taketh not or needeth not any testimony of men, and that which is once confirmed by the certainty of his eternal truth, hath no more need of the confirmation of man’s doctrine and writings, than the

\* Preface to the Homilies, “as it was published in the year 1562.” Edit. London, 1687.

bright sun at noontide hath need of the light of a little candle, to put away darkness, and to increase his light;"\* and not only that, but when talking of those darkened times in which the knowledge of the true God had been so much obscured among Christians by false glosses, want of information in God's Word, and the uncontrolled imagination or prejudices of writers, the Church, in "The Homily on Good Works," remarks, "that scant well learned men, and but a small number of them knew, or at least would know and durst affirm, the truth, to separate or sever God's commandments from the commandments of men. Whereupon did grow much error, superstition, idolatry, vain religion, overthwart judgment, great contention, with all ungodly living." Indeed, had the Church of England ever intended to drive her people into the suspicious pastures of the Fathers, she could scarcely have avoided some mention of them in the Prayer-book and Homilies of a different kind from that which we meet; if she had been totally silent respecting them in all these, it might have been argued that in her traditional opinions she held favourable sentiments respecting them, and we might have felt obliged to

\* Second part of "The Homily against Peril of Idolatry," at the beginning.

yield to the force of that sort of argument, did we coincide with the writers of the Tracts in their notion of that offspring of tradition which they are desirous to use as a stepping-stone between the Prayer-book and the applauded Breviary.\* Differing from them, I hold it to be most easy to escape from its ingenuity under the shelter of the wholesome and valuable rule, justified by the principles of many writers, that the silence of the Church of England, on any point not expressed in Scripture, is a condemnation of it. But she has not preserved this total silence, and inasmuch as she has made mention of them, and declared the principle on which she has used them as witnesses, this is enough to satisfy us that nothing is to be added to what she has thus affirmed of them. She had opportunities of advancing their claims to a higher position than any given them by her elsewhere, in her Sixth Article on the Scriptures, and in her Thirty-fourth upon traditions, and in her Thirty-fifth on the Homilies; opportunities which she could not have honestly passed over, if she did not entirely condemn the notion that we are to look to the unanimous consent of the Fathers for a pattern of our own unanimity; and indeed even

\* See "Tracts for the Times," No. 75. "On the Roman Breviary as embodying the substance of the devotional Services of the Church Catholic." Vol. iii.

in the reasonings of the writers whose opinions are now attracting so much attention in Britain, there is an admission of the inapplicability of this rule of Vincentius of Lerens to the present state of the Church, a circumstance worthy the consideration of the serious reader, when we remember that they give a prominent place among what they style the Records of the Church to his writings upon the texts of heresy and error; and this admission is the more to be weighed, because it is expressed in language which exhibits them as charging upon the Church of Rome, not only that kind of inconsistency into which they themselves have fallen,\* but the very same example of it.†

\* See page 177.

† "There is difficulty in applying the doctrine of this extract in these times, that the Church has forfeited in great measure its Catholicity; that is, in matter of fact, it was unanimous in its whole creed, in Vincent's day, and it is not now."—"He considers the Church to possess within it that principle of health and vigour which expels heresies out of its system without its suffering more than a temporary derangement from them; the state of things is altered now, in matter of fact, though the Church of Rome attempts to deny it, by cutting off from the Catholic Church such branches as do not agree with itself; but this is arguing in a circle, for its members, after having cut off from them all that do not agree with them, maintain they are Catholic, because they all speak the same thing."—*Tracts for the Times; Records of the Church*, vol. ii., at the end; *St. Vincent of Lirens, on Acts of Heresy*.

It would be impossible for every individual in the whole Catholic Church to act upon this test of heresy for private edification and guidance. A great many questions must be settled before it could become available except to the labours of a general council; and the experience of the Church's history shows how little that is satisfactory could be attained by councils, even if we could secure an universal representation of the Church in them.

The first great question would be, What is the Catholic Church? While this is open all other theological questions are supposed to be open, inasmuch as to authorize them as doctrines of the Catholic Church, it is but reasonable to imagine that they ought to be promulgated by her as such. Then, Who are the Fathers? another inquiry of some nicety and difficulty; then, What writings ascribed to those who are allowed to be Fathers of authority are genuine, and what are forged or interpolated? Then, What are essentials, and what may be considered points of minor importance? How are men of homely occupations, and of pursuits which necessarily detach them from the walks of literature, to enter upon such startling preliminaries as these? These are matters of knowledge which do not always come into the possession even of the best-informed among mankind; nor

can we suppose that such difficulties in the way of salvation were ever intended by the benevolent Lord who rules over us. The writings of the Fathers are ponderous tomes, so numerous that a whole life would be insufficient to make an ardent and diligent student fully and accurately acquainted with them ; and as they are all either in the Greek or Latin language, there is no satisfactory access to them, except through the medium of a classical education. This being so, it is evident that the great bulk of mankind must always be excluded from a possession of this knowledge ; and yet the Gospel was intended for the poor especially, if for any more than others. It was intended for the ignorant ; not many wise, not many great, not many noble, were attracted by it at first, but the humble and meek and the poor : the highways were searched, the wandering, thoughtless, uninstructed sheep were searched for ; the Lord's teaching referred to no Rabbies, it was simple ; it was intelligible ; His quotations from Scripture, too, were brief and apposite ; everything in our blessed Saviour's teaching seemed delightfully easy ; it did not conceal from the awakened mind that there were difficulties in the way, but it pointed out the manner of overcoming them, through the supplies of Divine grace by his own Spirit ; it did not teach man to look to man, but



to come direct to himself ; it savoured not of the bondage of learning and of ceremonies ; and, although speaking of a strait gate and a narrow way, yet it had more to allure than to deter—more to encourage the poor and unlearned than to dishearten them ; it did not speak of Fathers, of councils, of popes, of decrees, of bulls,—it did not appeal to the unanimous consent of men, but to the lifegiving Word of God ; it warned against the Scribe and the Pharisee without, as much as against the evil heart of unbelief within ; it referred the disciples for a continuance in that Word to the true and only infallible teacher, who most assuredly always has led, and always may be expected to lead, to a true knowledge of the way of holiness ; for although because of order and all its advantages, in submission to the Divine command, we are to subject ourselves to those who are over us in the Lord, yet we are to submit to them only in the Lord, not in the Fathers, not in the popes, not in the councils, not in man, but in the Lord only ; no volume of any Father is to be approved, except so far as it is consentaneous with the Word of Christ ; the same is to be pronounced of every authority adduced in any Church ; nor will any chain of succession or continuation, however linked together, or dovetailed in its separate parts, ever give to any doctrine a sufficient sanction

to be received as indispensably necessary, either to the constituting of a Christian Church, or to the obtaining of everlasting salvation, unless it can be made plain to an ordinary understanding that the same is set forth with equal force and cogency in the same respect in the written Word of God,—all other matters debated upon in any human writings whatever are matters of mere indifference, and may be continued, renewed, or abolished, according to the several circumstances of time, place, climate, habits, laws, or opinions of propriety and utility which may prevail in various countries, so that there are powerful reasons for adopting a wise and deliberate forbearance from venturing upon a territory so vague, so barren, so full of fallacious spots, so abounding with false lights, so commingling truth with error, so abounding in marks of distraction, opposition, and even fraud,—Vigilius fighting in the disguise of Athanasius, and authors unknown bestowing the paternity of their productions upon Dionysius the Areopagite, and upon Anacletus, to say nothing of their being willing to hand it over to Clement the pupil of the apostles and to the apostles themselves; Cyril conflicting with Theodoret; Chrysostom hated and attacked for his doctrinal views by Theophilus Alexandrinus! There is every cause why we should shrink from a remodelling of churches.

now-a-days, according to views and principles which were exploded at the Reformation. Of their own nature the writings of the Fathers and of the schoolmen, taken together, were proceeding fast to the destruction of all right religion at that time ; and had the latter not been checked in their persevering and hurtful industry upon the former before the invention of printing, that event in the history of Christianity would for ages perhaps have postponed religious reform, and so would have had an opposite influence to that which it happily has exercised upon the production of the doctrines of Christ into light and lustre. There was much indeed that was good in most of those Christian writers who lived near the times of the apostles, but it cannot be forgotten that many would then attain a reputation for learning and wisdom on terms much more cheap than could procure them at the present day. During the first eight centuries of the Church of Christ, the most favourable views which we can form of education will convince us that very few, even of the noble and wealthy, were brought up to so much as all may now attain to in reading or writing, so that any man of a pregnant imagination and of sufficient boldness could then pass for a giant in wisdom and in piety; a modern book which appears under favourable auspices, sent forth with

a name sufficiently known to recommend it, may perhaps, in the course of a month, fall into the hands of ten thousand persons at home and abroad who are competent to form each a judgment upon its contents, and in many instances qualified to compare them with the accumulated learning of antiquity ; but the writings of the ancient Fathers were only known in their monasteries and colleges, or from their pulpits, except when rare and costly manuscripts were obtained by the affluent, who frequently may have coveted the possession of them, not from any capability of using them for profiting in their doctrine, but to employ them either for superstitious uses, or to gratify the eye with the splendour of the ornaments and the elegance of their execution. The writings of the Fathers are often filled with mystical language and strange explanations ; sometimes the same author is most precise and dogmatical in his statements of doctrine, and sometimes he is diffuse and extravagant, figurative and highly declamatory in his exhortations ; artful men, on the one hand, or they on whom their arts have imposed, have gathered from the incautious expressions of popular declamation what they have represented as the severe and rigid exposition of some godly Father ; while honest men have, upon the other, laboured to draw the proper limitations for controlling these

less formal statements, and to maintain that Scriptural truth which some who are orthodox have set down in their more precise and accurate compositions. This mixture of forensic eloquence, flowery and rhetorical ornament, wild inconsistencies, rash, daring, and unfounded assertions with the truth of God, and with the fables of men, is no small proof of the danger, not to say the sin, of trusting to them in any way as guides ; nor even can we assure ourselves in any degree, that the boasted unanimity can be claimed for them in that substantial and undoubted shape, which could give us unshaken confidence either in their separate or mutual operations. They are just as unanimous in matters of heresy as they are in the things of truth ; they contradict each other—they are claimed by the authors of the various heresies which vexed and divided the Church for a thousand years from its foundation ; and it has been well observed, that “ whole generations have been consumed in disputations as to what the meaning of their writings is,”—they have been interpolated by the monks,—they have been drawn from their legitimate sense by the advocates of opposite opinions ; in fine, what all human critics must be in some degree they are pre-eminently, participant of error ; they have perhaps many a golden grain, but for every one a thousand others !

## THE LIVING HEART.

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A delightful promise.—The terms heart and life.—The living heart gives promise of the power of great usefulness, and the prospect of much temporal happiness.—Its life is incomplete until in heaven.—The living heart imparts itself.—Heathen and Christian benevolence.—The hardened reader.

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THE system of rewards and punishments, although the principle of merit be excluded, is thoroughly incorporated into the religion of the Bible; every duty has its counterpart in a promise expressed or implied—general or special; every promise is man's title to a distinction conferred by the hands of God, yet how little are we affected by this high encouragement to look for those honours which are universally admitted among Christians to be inexpressibly superior to whatever earth or man can hold out to the expectation! There is one of these promises full of brightness; a happy and a holy promise on which I have often loved to dwell; it is a noble subject for a sermon, for a

letter to a spiritual correspondent, for an interview with an inquiring disciple, for a general conversation on the advantages of religion, when the spirit of Infidelity has found an advocate of the notion that all piety is misery, and that the service of God in the Gospel is bondage—for a sick chamber where the experience of a long-tried Christian has proved religion to be the best solace of life and the unfailing source of true enjoyment, or where the recollection of an ill-spent pilgrimage has imparted a conviction to the sufferer, that disobedience to the Gospel is the most certain method of bringing over the mind and prospects of man a darkened and unhappy complexion. “Your heart shall live that seek God” is the promise of which I speak; a volume of discussion might easily be produced on the signification of the two principal words used here, heart and live; the former has many different shades of meaning attached to it in Scripture, and sometimes meanings perfectly distinct from each other; but they are for the most part easily apprehended from the context. Sometimes the heart, as the seat of the affections, is distinguished from the source of the thoughts, as when Paul says to the Philippians, “The peace of God shall keep your hearts and minds;” sometimes it is taken for the mind, as where our Lord is soothing his affrighted followers and saying to

them, "Why are ye troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?" Very often it means the affections alone, as when Samuel stimulated Israel to seek for God after they had long lamented him, and the ark had rested twenty years in Kirjath-jearim: "If ye do return unto the Lord with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the Lord." The term live includes all the functions, purposes, and enjoyments of existence; it is used here emphatically,—“Your heart shall live that seek God;” it will possess the benefits of spiritual life, it will have all that is worth living for; it will confer upon you all that constitutes the real blessings and happiness of existence. To exist without a living heart is true misery; to possess it can only be attained by seeking God. The living heart will be invested with all the honours, privileges, and advantages that can follow upon life, so far as they are deemed good for man by his heavenly Father; there will be no departure from God, no hardness, no impenitence, no evil in its imaginations, no corruption in its desires that will not have their counterbalance and their antidote in the bestowments of Divine grace; it will no longer be unduly attached to the world; it will not faint, it need not be troubled, it shall not be ruled by Satan who places so many hearts



under the despotic dominion of sin;—God will be enthroned in it; it will be opened to receive him, to be given to him, to rejoice in him; it will have his law inscribed upon it; it will have his Gospel treasured up and prized in it; it will be filled with love, with sincerity, with purity, with uprightness; it will be relieved of every doubt. This magnificent promise, which has its parallel in the words “hear, and your soul shall live,” confers upon a believer in Christ the power of great usefulness, the prospect of much temporal happiness, and the unquestionable assurance of eternal life. The best answer to those who speak evil of the things they know not, in denouncing as enemies to a holy life all who do not believe works to be the condition of salvation, is, to bring before them a just representation of the living heart that seeks for God, when it is manifesting the power of grace, which, where faith exists, causes that faith to work by love. We are to try the grounds of godliness, not by the standards and tests of unregenerate man, not by the laws and maxims of human law, not by the rules and principles of pharisaic self-righteousness, but according to the principles laid down in God’s unerring Word. The law, although it remains peculiarly for transgressors as to its sanctions, and will undoubtedly be brought to bear upon them in the infliction of its menaced punish-

ments, and so ought to be a terror to them, yet loses not its obligation upon the penitent and faithful disciple; he fulfils the law—by virtue of being under grace,—he acknowledges the lustre of its moral complexion,—he admires its characters of holy, just, and good,—he knows that were it fulfilled by all, it would make heaven of earth, and present man in his original excellency. He knows that to infringe upon the law is, to subvert the foundations of human happiness; to encourage man in the ways of death and destruction; to derange, distrust, and overturn the machinery of social, national, commercial life; to militate against the reception of the holy Gospel; to wound and grieve the Holy Spirit of God by the promotion of envy, hatred, malice, covetousness, revenge, and every evil passion. He has his standard by which to ascertain what he ought to be, and what he is in respect of this moral law, from whose obligation there is and can be no escape. He knows that the inquiry must be instituted, How is the Christian to fulfil the command? and yet to be able to shew that he does not dishonour God by representing that which is God's free gift to be bestowed upon a condition. He is at no loss to carry that inquiry to a speedy and a successful issue; for he takes up the Bible principle, love is the fulfilling of the law;—now in no other way

can the moral law be fulfilled but by love—the pure love of God,—which stands at the head of the gifts and fruits of the Spirit. Love for God includes an ardent desire to possess every exalted motive, and to accomplish every honourable deed, in order to glorify Him in the body and in the spirit;—without it, morality will be a cold, dead, dry, and painful labour—an ungrateful task; without it, morality is slavery. An unwilling obedience is rebellion, so that obedience without love is the form without the power; the living heart alone can be truly and spiritually moral, if the distinction be allowable.

When we reflect upon the promises of God to the believer, and upon the relation in which we stand to each other as members of the human family, and more particularly of the Christian Church, it is impossible for us not to perceive that it was the intention of God that we should be constantly engaged in conferring mutual benefits upon each other, by the exercise of the best affections of the heart. Beside God himself there is not an independent being in creation. It is so ordered that our life cannot be produced, or cherished, or rendered tolerable, without the intervention of others. Every degree by which we are removed from a state of barbarism is an additional proof that we are dependent upon one

another. There are many ways in which it has been appointed by God that man can be serviceable to man. By mutual concessions and mutual self-denials, we construct the system upon which social life proceeds. Each must relinquish something; he must abridge his liberty; he must share his property; he must contribute his labour; he must exercise, not for himself alone, but for his neighbours, his rational powers; he must, in some degree, dedicate to the public weal whatever of skill or capability he possesses; he must consider others as well as himself, in order to place the common welfare on a safe and a satisfactory foundation; and when all this has been arranged, and all the conventional rules by which communities are to be regulated have been completed, there are innumerable good offices by which we may assist one another, and promote our mutual well-being and comfort. The trials and sorrows of life furnish an endless series of occasions upon which we can consider each other. No one knows, until the time of need comes, how great a treasure may be found in an affectionate and friendly neighbour. There are crushing moments in the scenes of life when all our powers are paralyzed, and when God humbles us by teaching us that we cannot live without one another. It is the Christian's peculiar anxiety to show, at such a

time, the heart living in all the tenderness of sympathy. When a sense of wretchedness comes with overwhelming power; when I have no spirit within me, no collectedness, no capability of bearing up under the heavy pressure of some sad calamity, I am perhaps unable to see, though willing to believe, how it can be for my good. I am disposed to think that by one blow God had cut off from me all that could render life tolerable; in danger of offending him by discontent, by despondency, by excessive sorrow, by doubting his love, by forgetting his promises, by misinterpreting his chastisements, by supposing this world is my home. If experience teaches me that such feelings may operate, it conveys the additional lesson, if I have friends among the children of God, how those who seek him can be useful to others. Such an occasion tells me what the living heart is. The thoughts that crowd into the mind when this subject comes before it are anything but satisfactory, as they bear upon the spiritual character of man generally. At such a time as I describe, men discover that there are few indeed, very few, who have a living heart. This is but what is to be expected among worldly men. They are not, however, without much that ought to make us love them; they have kindly feelings; they use affectionate and consoling words; they are anxious to restore our

equanimity, and to arm us against the dangers of giving way to excessive sorrow ; they are full of friendly offices ; their advice, their influence, their houses, their hospitality, their servants, their equipages, their personal services, and even their money, are often at the command of the afflicted, as far as they are required. I think such times tell us that there is more sympathy in all classes of men than might be expected. But, after all, there are even among these many who have not living hearts ; and whatever their wishes may be, or even their readiness to make sacrifices that might well serve to cheer the spirit of a sufferer, they cannot be the instruments of conferring upon me an advantage of equal value to that which I may be enabled to derive from one who seeks God, and has a living heart. The living heart can be communicated, it can impart its qualities, it can dictate sweet counsels, it can bring balm from Gilead, it can lead me to the great Physician, it can revive the failing spirit, it can make me calm, it can give me hope, it can allay my grief, it can dispel my doubts, it can place every act of God, and every movement of mine in its true aspect, and reconcile me to what, with worldly councillors, I might never learn how to receive as I ought. A really religious man will be carried by the impulses of his living

heart into every scene where human nature is subjected to suffering. This living heart will be ever at work to make other hearts know God and rejoice in him. The very example of such a man, in his general deportment, is always certain to work effectually in the community of which he is an ornament; and this is more particularly the case when he happens to have a fine natural disposition; for although grace is known to model the tempers, and to effect revolutions in the whole character; although it can make the wolf and the lamb to have kindred spirits, yet still there are peculiarities of demeanour, and prejudices of education, which it never thoroughly eradicates, and a repulsiveness of manner often survives a man's conversion in a degree that is sufficient to make those who are not his intimate friends doubt whether he be a Christian at all. But even in a case like this, the living heart will be discovered and acknowledged, at least by some; but where a suitable field is presented in a community of any extent, the evidences of all this are easily found. I have but to go to any of our numerous philanthropic and religious institutions, and to trace out its history, and I shall almost in every case be enabled to attribute its origin or its success to some living heart, glowing with desires to honour God and to improve the condition of man. In

the private walks of life, also, I will hear of its influence. Good men are like rivers; when the heavens open out their treasures of rains and pour them upon the earth, they naturally make their way to the ocean; the rivers, as they flow, are not content until they return to the body of waters from which the streams they convey were originally drawn; they hurry onward, they overflow their channels in their haste and profusion, and all that they can bring their impetuosity to bear upon, is led forward by them to the sea. Not unlike this is the conduct of those men whose hearts are living hearts; the grace which they are charged with came down from heaven, and they are on a journey heavenward; they spread their arms wide upon the right hand and upon the left, and as many as they can they are anxious to bring with them. Ten thousand blessings rest upon their heads! they realize in themselves the truth of what the Scriptures say, that "when a man's ways please the Lord, they make even his enemies to be at peace with him;" their most bitter opponents cannot call them Antinomians; if the Antinomian spoke of them he must call them Lawists; they have exemplified morality in their own persons and families, they have taken his prey from Satan, they have checked the spirit of litigation, they have settled domestic feuds, they have re-



claimed the drunkard and the profligate, they have brought the voice of joy and gladness into the melancholy abodes of the wicked, they have visited and consoled the sick, the fatherless, and the widow in their affliction, they have held themselves unspotted from the world, they have multiplied the candidates for heaven. The living heart will always long to impart life to other hearts. But this is not all, they have every prospect of temporal happiness themselves, and that will not consist so much in the abundance of the things which they possess externally as in the development of internal qualities, or, in other words, the exercise of a living heart—tenderness, sensibility, pity, kindness, amiability. Charity, in its least and in its greatest sense, may here be well brought out and exercised. We are told by those who have lived longest in the practice of even the moral virtues which natural religion teaches, that the consciousness of having benefited their fellow-creatures by fulfilling them, has ever been found far more than an adequate reward for the sacrifice or self-denial which may have been called for in the exercise of them; but all this has been done and felt where Gospel principles have never been known. We have some splendid examples in the history of Heathen nations of the extent to which they cultivated civilization, as founded upon mutual concessions such

as have just been described. They had well-regulated communities; they had polished society; they had hearts that could melt at the sorrows of man; they could clothe the naked, feed the hungry, support the weak, visit the sick; they had amiable manners; they had attractive accomplishments; they had good nature, sensibility, sympathies; they had a host of virtues solid in themselves, ornamental to the character of the possessor, and beneficial to the participators; but, notwithstanding all, they knew nothing, literally nothing, of the rich repast of enjoyment produced by Christian benevolence, nor could they form an idea of the numbers to which one single act, founded upon it, is capable of imparting pleasure; they had their thrill of delight when they felt their hand engaged in that giving of relief to others which has been ever held, both by sacred and profane writers, to be attended with a higher blessedness, and consequently a deeper pleasure, than even to be the recipient of it; they were not without knowing that it was no mean reward in itself to feel the glow of satisfaction that fills the breast when a fellow-creature is rescued from death, restored to liberty, or shielded from oppression; but they knew not of that more moving thrill that penetrates man and makes him conscious of a principle at work within him that began in heaven, and convinces him that he is

elevating his brother to take a place amongst a higher order of beings, wherever a heart is opened, a conscience purified, or a pardon felt. The whole machinery of heaven is moved by such an act as this, and the movement is a movement of joy. There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth, and as far as the intelligence travels throughout the borders of the Church, it contributes satisfaction to every member of Christ's spiritual body.

If I know that I have been the means of turning the heart of one disobedient soul to the wisdom of the just, I thereby may conclude that I have accomplished an object, the memory of which will for ever refresh my spirit with gladness. It is a theme upon which I can converse with God, with angels, with all the redeemed when time shall be no more; it is possible that by that one act, I may remotely influence the spiritual condition of multitudes who may not be born, until I shall have been long numbered with the dead. In the mysterious ways of Providence, I cannot know what direction one spark of light may take, how long it may retain a dormant power before it begins to shape its course, or in what degree or how soon it may break forth into a flame; this thought alone would furnish the materials of much happiness, and that kind of happiness too which

may almost be called eternal, for it will not be affected by our death, nor can it die itself.

But in other ways also the living heart furnishes the means of great present enjoyment. It is quite possible for a man of a pious spirit to possess, under the most depressing circumstances in which the dispensations of Providence can place him, an amount of personal content and pleasure for which others who have every worldly advantage are looking in vain. Wealth will not purchase it, honours will not merit it, desire will not compass it, ambition cannot reach it,—it is a gift of God. What I speak of may be made intelligible (if that be needed) by the words of St. James, who says, “Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations,” and it is exemplified in the person of the great apostle of the Gentiles, when he utters the striking words, “I know how to be abased and how to abound; everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need; I have determined in whatever state I am, therewith to be content.” This is a lesson worthy of all the wisdom in the universe; it is a lesson that none but the living heart can ever truly learn; but he who is taught of God does learn it, he is ready for his Master’s use in whatever service he chooses to employ him; he can be happy and thankful in

times of temporal prosperity, much more happy and infinitely more thankful than other men. When God chooses to send reverses—to remove his friends, to take away his resources, to send any season of adversity, he has a resource within that ministers to his peace, and all is well. But take man in the ordinary condition of life, and the happiness of none can be compared with that of the faithful and consistent Christian; whatever is good and favourable he enjoys with a double zest, because he enjoys it on a right principle; he knows the use for which it was given, he knows the measure in which it is to be employed, or in which it may be indulged by him.

So far I have only spoken of “the life that now is” in the believer’s heart, the life that shall yet be in it remains to be noticed. I have no small consolation when I meet the words of Christ,—“Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory.” Whatever may be my disappointments in things that are transitory, I can experience none, except by my own fault, in things that are unchangeable; for although I am indeed powerless in them, yet God withholds from none who earnestly seek it, that grace which alone imparts the requisite strength; the things that are transitory may elude my grasp though I

pursue them steadily, or though I merit them, according to human opinion and my own convictions, and even when I have succeeded in gaining possession of them, they may melt from my hands in a short-lived hour. The things that are unchangeable may indeed keep themselves beyond my reach, not because they are shunning me, but because I am shunning them; if I am permitted to converse with any who are flying from God, I am bound to tell them that they are putting away life from themselves in its highest and best sense. The heart that cleaves to God has the truest life on earth, and in heaven it will be all life. Then, and not till then, can I fully know what the living heart is; then there will be no possibility of death; natural and spiritual death will be equally impossible there; of heaven it is said, "there shall be no more death;" then there will be no liability to the declension of my powers; then the functions of my new and heavenly life will be unfailing; then there will be no interruptions from the objects of sense; then there will be the undying fervour, the devoted love, the unflinching faithfulness, the uninterrupted obedience which will enable me to do adequate honour to my God; then I shall know what it is to live; then will I comprehend, and not till then, for what exquisite enjoyment of life man was made; then will I understand why God

appointed the uncertainties, the sorrows, and the pains which are incidental to our present state; I will see mercy and love inscribed upon them all; I will know how they were made to work together for good in those ways which have been screened from scrutiny on earth; there will then be opened out to me, I have no doubt, a view, at once amazing and convincing, of the Divine methods by which man is moved in the mysterious ways of providence and grace towards the eternal world, how his inordinate attachments to earthly objects are broken up, how his confidence in men and in the world are shaken, how he is gradually but powerfully led when his heart feels life to search for a treasure in heaven, to place his affections upon God.

Could I now impart my own persuasions upon the subject of this essay to those who may peruse it, I should estimate that achievement, did I ever come to know it, above some of the proudest accomplishments of man. I cannot tell what eye may fall upon these pages, whether of a hard or a softened heart; it is not likely that one whose heart has resolutely thrown out a defence against all approaches of religious influences, should be found in the study of an essay in the midst of a book written professedly upon sacred subjects; but should it be so I might take the circumstance

as an evidence of curiosity, at least, and so would conclude that one who is curious will not feel offended by remarks or even questions upon that which he has chosen to be an investigator of. When I say you have a hard heart, I mean that your heart is still shut up, though capable of being opened out and put in possession of feelings, desires, and enjoyments, the value and delight of which you may immediately be the owner of, upon some reasonable interval being allowed to pass for reflection and for the adoption of proper means. I do not take it for granted that you are profane or profligate, or even altogether regardless of prayer and some recognition of religion, but I assume that you have never yet derived pleasure from the contemplation of sacred subjects, or enjoyed satisfaction in the fulfilment of religious duties; and that in the ordinary affairs of life, in whatever way you are connected with them, you have but little pleasure too; that all except exciting amusement, or sensual enjoyment, or mere literary and scientific pursuit, is tedious and perhaps irritating to you. Now, what I would ask with all affectionate and respectful humility of my reader is this: if any such as I now speak of should ever look into this page, is it not to be lamented that you have so little enjoyment



in existence? and are you every day diminishing whatever of it you possess, not only by the fact that your term of existence is hasting on rapidly, but because the excess with which in all probability you pursue your pleasures, or your occupations, produces a daily reaction which weakens your frame, discomposes your mind, and embitters the fountain of life's enjoyments? To a physician who could relieve you from this you would gladly devote much of what you possess, yet it is extremely doubtful whether common means could ever restore your mind to that tone which would be required to influence your physical constitution materially, did they even bring you into a more regular and rational treatment of yourself. I am no despiser of the noble science of medicine; the human species is indebted to those who have excelled in it as being amongst its greatest benefactors, and I have ever deemed its disparagement to be a mark of extreme illiberality and ignorance; but I hold that there is no auxiliary to the physician of greater power than religion, particularly in cases like yours; for although I know that natural causes and effects have their own place, and cannot be affected in their general operation or production by things not physical, yet as medical men all allow that the mind influences the body, and as we know

the religious mind to be influenced by the highest power in the best way for its possessor, it would be impiety not to conclude that there are cases in which sound religion in a sound mind will operate happily upon the use of proper means ; this reflection is worthy of consideration even on rational grounds ; I therefore lay it before the reader I have spoken of, in the hope that it may suggest a course of thought which may possibly show him the advantages of the living heart ; nor do I fear that any well-informed Christian will tell me here that I am lowering the Gospel by recommending it upon such motives ; I conceive that we are justified at all times in using the argument for religion that it is for the interest of every man that he should embrace it, because it is an argument found in Scripture. Every man is accessible at this point, for who is there who does not consider self ? But few are to be approached, in any hope of success, with a proposal that from the mere love of God they should forsake their sins ; and yet we find in the progress of almost all converts to true religion that alarm for themselves came first ; that then they were led to love the God who released them from their terrors, and so were put in possession of the right motives for devoting themselves to his service. The subject before us is capable of great expansion, but it cannot be pro-

ceeded with much further at present. I have known what it is to be without its influence, and I know what it is to have some of the beginnings at least of the Divine life within, those promptings to be prepared for the life that is yet to come, which bring us to God ; and I am supported by the testimony of a cloud of witnesses in affirming that to have the living heart in its full operation, will conduce more to my present peace of mind and solid happiness, than any possessions or honours which I could have without it. To live by faith, to live by hope, to live by prayer, to live in the reception of grace through its many channels, to seek God in the outpouring of his Spirit, in the life-giving power of his Word, in the strengthening and refreshing efficacy of his table, is to secure a treasure invaluable ; these are all living fountains—fountains filled with the life that is in Christ ; he appoints them for our use, he attaches to them his blessing. He makes them the conductors of every principle that I need to guide me, of every stay which is requisite to support me ; the promise of this life is indeed a cheering promise. He has not left it to me to look upon it as a mere expression of his love, or a general assurance of reward ; he has expounded it for me in the most encouraging form, for he has said, “ Because I live, ye shall live also.”

## SEEKING GOD.

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God's presence enjoyed by all men.—His spiritual presence distinguished from his providential.—The value of this latter mode of God's presence.—In what sense, and with what limitations we are to search for him.—The connexion of prophecy and political events with this duty.

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THERE seems to be a power in the language of religion very much proportioned to the humiliation of those who utter it; it remains to be explained fully, and, perhaps, the explanation in another world may be a cause of wonder and of joy, on what grounds God appointed that the connexion between humiliation and power in all things relating to religion should subsist as it does. It is particularly apparent in all parts of Christianity, our Lord's own humiliation and power; man committed to the grave after the same example in dishonour, and raised in glory; the Gospel put into the poorest, and the weakest, and the most despised hands, and yet endued with power. In the case of David, we meet the same.

After he is cast into the very depths of humiliation, and brought to feelings of the most bitter compunction and shame for his sins, he speaks in language on sacred subjects which tells us that his whole heart and soul are engaged for God; his exhortations to search for a knowledge of God are very forcible,—they bring before the mind a subject which I shall adopt in this essay.

I do not know that we could better describe the difference between a converted sinner and a man in his natural unrenewed state, than by saying, that the one seeks God, while the other shuns him. The Christian is always seeking God, not indeed in the sense that might thoughtlessly be attached to the expression, as if God were never present with him, and as if his search for God were always fruitless. God is ever present with those who love and fear him; there is a signification, too, in which that glorious Being is present with all men at all times. He is about our bed, and about our path, and spieth out all our ways; he feeds us in the day; he keeps us in the night. It is his unintermitting work to give its proper motions to our reasoning power; to cause the fountain of the blood to send its current through every region of our body; it is his care to give us all our portion of natural enjoyments; he deals out to us the materials of

pleasure and of pain; he gives us health and spirits; he contributes in innumerable ways to make us conscious of his wisdom, his power, his goodness, and his mercy. There are tokens of his presence that come alike to all. He maketh his sun to rise upon the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust; and his general providential promises are as applicable to the unbeliever as to the disciple. When God pronounces that seed-time and harvest shall never fail, he assures all men that he will be ever with them throughout our world's duration to fill their hearts with food and gladness. But this is not the only sense in which God is present on the earth; it is quite possible that God may be present in these and other ways with those who in many respects are total strangers to him; but his true and faithful servants are acquainted with him not only in the way of his providential, but of his spiritual presence. If I know nothing of God in this way I have either voluntarily placed myself amongst the lowest grades of men, or else I have lived up to this day in entire ignorance of the rank which I was designed to hold among the beings of Almighty creation. The highest character of man is to be truly religious; the lowest is to be without God and without hope. The greatest monarch that sits upon an earthly throne

would be rendered still greater by religion rightly understood, and faithfully followed. There is no revolution in the history of man's concerns that can find a parallel to the change which takes place in the transfer of the affections from worldly to spiritual objects—it is a change, the nature and extent of which can only be conceived or appreciated by those who have known what it is from the fact itself. The whole heart and soul are now engrossed with the very reverse of what engaged them before; where the eye was dull to see before, it is now keen and penetrating; where the ear was dull to hear hitherto, it now catches every sound; the tastes, the recreations, the pursuits, the thoughts, are all different from what they were. In former times God was altogether left out of the calculation; but now, everything is undertaken with a due regard to him; and not only is God thus present with his faithful servants, but they are conscious of his presence with them as the purifier of their thoughts. The unrenewed mind of man is a world of iniquity; it is characteristic of that state, that those who are placed in it are all included in the description, "The imaginations of the heart are only evil continually;" but he who is a believer in Christ looks for the preventing and following grace of the Holy Spirit. He creates a clean heart; he

renews a right spirit in man; he impresses the imagination; he fills the mind; he directs the current of the thoughts; and one mighty instrument of the purification of the thoughts, in the use of which God is ever present with his people in his holy and gracious Word: "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth." And this presence of God with all who honour him, by the devotion of their hearts and lives, enlarges itself continually in the bestowment of many blessings, and crowns the enjoyment of them all by opening out to him a supply of peace and happiness truly invaluable. God is present with him as the source of his peace. If we could look with minuteness into the world around us we should soon discover, independently of what each of us must know amongst our own intimate friends, a very extended and lamentable scene of disquietude. There are innumerable sources of uneasiness,—some from within, some from without; some arising from our own temperament, some from the mistakes, or the want of principle, or the malice of others. From these the mere man of the world has no imaginable shield to protect him; but the true believer is not without his safeguard: he has but, in the midst of all or any of these things, to look up anxiously to his God; and in the benignant smile of his countenance he



will find peace at least; none but a heavenly power can bestow it; none but this power can transfer it; the world cannot give it, the world cannot take it away; and he who possesses it has as it were God always present with him. I am unable to estimate the value of that peace to those who participate in the causes of disquietude which are incident to our mortal condition. When I look upon the man whose plans and pursuits of life have all failed him, his prospects blighted, his friends alienated, his children in penury, his very home no longer acknowledging him, his spirit broken, his heart failing him, his hope gone; when I see him shivered, blighted, cast down, and it may be trampled upon, yet after all he can have peace. Bring him to the Gospel, make him a petitioner to the Father of love, whose compassions fail not; and the sufferer will not long be left without a persuasion within him that all will soon be well; as far as the world in which he met all these is concerned, it is indeed possible he may never regain his place in it; but the Lord "tempers the wind to the shorn lamb." He gently moves him to submission, to confidence, to calmness. Be still, and know that I am God, is whispered into his ear; heaviness may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. This is the very soul and essence of

religion ; its value is, that it will help us in such a time of need. Thus, under every weight of temporal depression, from whatever cause it may arise, the Christian can be happily conscious of the presence of his God. God is the solace of his afflictions—the soother of his pains ; God allays his fears ; God removes his doubts, God gives him the cheering gift of hope in another world, in place of that which he has lost in this ; in one word, God is present with him in all the plenitude of the fruits of the Spirit. He brings to his door the blessedness of love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. He crucifies the flesh ; he crucifies the affections ; he crucifies the lusts ; he causes him to live in the Spirit. How then are we to seek for God, if he be thus continually present with us ? When I say it is my duty to seek for God I do not understand the terms I use quite literally, it is necessary to convey a great deal respecting God in figurative language, for as all our words originate in the application of language to natural objects, we do not possess a phraseology which would enable us to speak literally respecting the Divine character, attributes, operations, purposes, or doctrines. It is a duty enjoined upon all Christians to acquaint themselves with God. To acquaint ourselves with

any objects or persons, we must search them out and find them ; our acquaintance will consist in learning a number of particulars which only time and experience will place within our reach. But the Divine Being is an object with which, considering our present faculties, and the limited duration of our mortal existence, we never could be more than partially acquainted. There is a limitation to seeking God similar in extent and in kind to the limitation annexed to the command, "Be ye holy ; for I am holy ;" we are to go as far in the fulfilment of each as the range of our powers, intellectual or physical, will permit ; just as far as the circumstances of our present existence will enable us. That they enable us to go very far is true, undoubtedly ; that they place no insurmountable obstacle in our way to prevent our proceeding at all in this search is, while reason rules, equally true. It is impossible to find a man, however wretched, however insignificant in his own eyes or in the estimation of others, however mutilated in body, however crushed in spirit, who cannot occupy his mind more or less in this seeking for God : he may have never opened an eye upon the fair creations of our world ; he may have never moved throughout or in any of its exciting scenes ; he may have never mixed among his species ; he may never have had his mind cultivated ; but still, when the glad tidings

of salvation through a crucified Saviour have reached him, when the heavenly dew of God the Holy Spirit has descended upon him to awaken his soul to a perception of the sinner's duties, he can and he will seek for God, and he will not be satisfied until he find him in the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ. And all may find him, unless they wantonly waste the opportunities. God will be sought. God, if we may venture so to speak, is anxious to be sought; he waits to be gracious; they that do not seek him and find him must die. The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the people that forget God. But God does not desire the death of the sinner. At the same time, as is hereafter to be observed more at large, God may not be found if men do not choose to embrace his seasonable offers. But then it is also to be remarked, that, although we may go very far in seeking God, yet what in our estimation seems very far, is as it were nothing, when we speak it in reference to the incomprehensible Jehovah. The Church is full of God, whom we seek to know. The world is full of God; time and its events are filled with God; all things teem with God, and the most glorious theatre upon which the character of God will be witnessed is futurity. And what is man that he should be able even to study those volumes

which reveal the Deity here? The very thought in this aspect of the subject, that God is to be sought and in any degree understood by us, is a startling thought, for who hath known the mind of the Lord? When we think of his eternal councils; when we propose to ourselves to consider his endless attributes already spoken of; when we bring our thoughts to bear upon the magnitude of his works, creation, redemption, sanctification; when we imagine him conflicting with Satan, destroying wickedness, raising up and throwing down empires, calling forth into greatness, and then extinguishing, by a turn of his hand, tribes, nations, armies, churches; when we contemplate the wide array of his militant people here; when we see how he sustains and cheers and blesses them; when we witness the gradual fulfilment of prophecy, the almost miraculous dissemination of his Word; when we look, on the one hand, upon the perpetual violations of his holy will, and on the other, upon the undeniable execution of his purposes through the instrumentality of ungodly men; these are subjects so vast, so deep, so remote from our sources of intelligence, from our powers of judgment, from the sphere of our action, that we can only know them as they are touched and coloured in the Bible, as they may be more or less sketched in the mental efforts of

some of our more highly-gifted brethren, and as they are capable of some illustration from the externals of our world. At the same time, every historical fact, every doctrine, every admonition of God's Word should exercise our minds, so far as our knowledge of events in the world extends, and that knowledge should never be incommensurate with our fair opportunities of acquiring it; so far as we can trace out any or every external indication of God, in the moral, the political, or the natural world, so far should we endeavour to seek and to know God. The world was made by Christ and for Christ. If I would understand the Lord's dealing with me and mankind, I must know well what takes place in the world, therefore everything connected with his creations is a subject for inquiry with all who are seeking God in the true enthusiasm of those who really intend to reach the object of their search. I know, indeed, that I shall be met at this point with an argument which has weighed more in the minds of even intelligent men than would have been supposed, an argument which I have never seen advanced without feeling that its adoption depreciated the reasoner in my estimation, as indicating but little knowledge of the Divine purposes, or of the testimonies of man as far as they are made known to us in revelation. That religious characters have

no concern with political transactions—public events, which are in other words but “the things that are coming upon the earth,” the very things that the prophetic Scriptures direct our thoughts to, none other than those things which St. John, the Divine, engaged his whole soul and intellect upon in Patmos, and filled his Revelation with for the contemplation of every subsequent age. These transactions are inseparably mixed up with the things that are conveyed to us in the Bible. The political condition of the Jews and of all the nations with which that people were in any way concerned, either by a passage through their countries, or a conflict with their inhabitants as they made their way to take possession of the land of promise, has ever been a legitimate and often a necessary subject for religious consideration. After their settlement in Jerusalem, their desolation effected by the Romans, and subsequently the diplomatic concerns of the countries throughout which they have been scattered, and from which they may be yet brought together into one illustrious body to give as Christian missionaries a tone and a complexion to all the great transactions upon the earth, have furnished topics for some of the most splendid exertions of the human mind, and have, when properly discussed, been found illustrative of the Bible: and who is so

impotent or so infatuated, as to say that the political condition of Europe, of India, China, and of the great western world, receiving, as it has been for three hundred years, into its bosom tribes, and nations, and kindreds, and people, are not vitally connected with the advancement or retardation of the principles of the Gospel, and consequently with the hopes, and privileges, and duties, and anxieties of man? It is true that our Lord did say, that his kingdom is not of this world, and most certainly it is not. Jesus is a King, and was, even in his humiliation, a King; not a King deriving his authority from this world, but a King of kings; a King authorized by his own inherent majesty; a King who took his crown from no convention, no principality, no consent of man, but who had all power given him in heaven and in earth; but though our Lord asserted this to show from what source his regal authority emanated, both he and his apostles evinced the deepest interest in the political affairs of the world. He and they had every concern with them. Did he take no interest in national reverses, when he predicted that one stone should not be left upon another in the temple of Jerusalem? Did he teach his apostles that they would not be interested in public transactions when he assured them, that nation should rise up against



nation, and that in the course of these collisions and in the lot of their vicissitudes, they should be subjected to all the miseries of wars, and rumours of wars; of murders, famines, pestilences, every one of which classes of events might, in themselves, and sometimes did, give rise to revolutions; or, when he said to the Jews, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof? Can we take up the prophetic roll and proceed one step in its application to the purposes for which it was given, without finding ourselves at once immersed in all the known political events of past times, and those before us now, as well as implicated in a way from which it is impossible to escape, with all that we may, on scriptural grounds, conclude is about to arise in future time? The very supposition, that with any pretension to active, intelligent, or informed minds we could avoid this, is utter futility itself. Who will argue with me on Christian principles, that I have no duties connected with events such as these in the days in which I live? I am not now arguing for or against any system of human politics; I am not recommending any man to barter his peace of mind; to surrender his dignity; to exasperate his temper; to neglect his domestic duties; to throw away his time; to dissipate his property upon

local or personal struggles in politics; but I argue, that it is folly to assert, that there is to be no contending for the faith, no cherishing of Bible principles, no upholding of all that tends to godliness; I argue, that every man, from the peer to the peasant, is bound to seek conscientiously for the will of God in these matters, and to use all his influence, moral, natural, spiritual; and shall I hesitate to add, in a right sense, and in the due fear of God, and in the earnest wish to promote his glory and man's eternal good—political? In what other way can I honestly seek to serve God? If I withhold from God whatever power I have to advance his kingdom in any of these ways, am I his faithful servant? Am I not bound to exercise my judgment in devising how I can best in these ways do the good in my generation, which God has intrusted me with the means and capabilities of doing? Further I do not go, as to the particular line which any one may take in effecting this, his own mind and conscience are to be the guide,—no man is to be his dictator in these things, but he is bound in every proper way to promote the love of truth, the stability of the Christian religion, the delivery of man from every superstition, and every moral and spiritual delusion; to elevate the Church of God; to extend the kingdom of God; in one word, to lend his sanction in its utmost extent, to

Christianity, as he believes it to be revealed in the Bible; and let me add my solemn conviction, that, if I should shrink from this, all I may think, or say, or do, respecting the great subject of seeking God, will be but the veriest hypocrisy.

The duty of seeking God has all the limitations I have spoken of in reference to the nature of our faculties, but has no limitation whatever in respect of the exercise of them; while we live, and move, and have our being; while we have a spark of reason left, we are to search for God. In every scene of life, in every occupation of the thoughts, in every study, in every duty, it becomes us to remember that we are to be seeking for God.

The outside view of Christianity never presents this truth—the spiritual mind soon apprehends, and very seldom fails to act upon it. This is the great foundation of prayer; no man can pray who is not heartily seeking for God, it is only he who “hungers and thirsts after righteousness” that is truly seeking for God, or that can enjoy the genuine satisfaction of communion with him; and it is the character of this hungering and thirsting, that they are not lessened but increased by the food and the draughts to which they lead us. The most salutary use of natural food and drink is, that after which we feel that we have not entirely satisfied the solicitations of appetite; the charac-

teristic of that real hungering and thirsting, that accumulation of desires for God, which we will have by looking for them from the Great Spirit, at whose bidding they can be dispensed, is, that the more ardently I apply myself in order to be satisfied, the more do I find I am anxious to proceed; so that here I am furnished with a test, whereby I may form no inadequate judgment of my spiritual condition. If the mind be wearied, the tastes ungratified, the thoughts worldly, the Bible uninteresting, public worship tedious, pure devotion irksome, they are all proofs that my search for God is at a stand, that there has been no progress, or that a declension has superseded it in my spiritual state; that there is no hungering and thirsting for the bread of life and the waters of salvation; and in such a case there is need that one would rouse me from the inglorious lethargy, and sound in my ears with energy and faithfulness the Saviour's words, "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To-day, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

## INFIDELITY.

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Unwillingness to entertain objections to Christianity.—Opportunities of defending religion ought to be embraced.—Arguments from analogy condemning the practice of those who shrink from this.—Mere religious argumentation injurious to the interests of truth.—The view of these matters to be taken from Scripture.—How the general state of social intercourse leads on this question.—The extent of Infidelity.—The believer has the same right to defend his faith which the Infidel has to attack it.—The model presented to us in the writings of St. Peter.

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WE often meet with an extreme unwillingness in the minds of serious and religious people to allow themselves to entertain for a moment any of those objections which are raised against revelation. They are of opinion that the evidences are so clear whereby the great principles of our holy faith are sustained, that to allow the question to be mooted at all is an unworthy condescension. Now, although this is certainly elevating religion to the very highest ground—and too high assuredly it cannot be placed—yet, notwithstanding, it seems

not just towards religion in another respect. I do not claim for religion its superiority over all else that can be supposed to interest the mind of man, except on account of its intrinsic excellence. I do not ask for religion the highest place in man's esteem and affections, because many wise, many great, and many noble persons have embraced and defended it, and lived and died rejoicing in its high and happy consolations; although I could easily enumerate a goodly series of names, the lustre of whose character is still acknowledged to be conspicuous, and connect them with religion as its lovers, its ornaments, and its advocates; yet, after all, I should but inadequately state its title to man's acceptance did I not put forth in its behalf other arguments of commendation than this fact, however gratifying and convincing it may appear.

. Whatever can be recommended on the ground of its own excellence has the very strongest and plainest claims on our regard; and no array of names, however honourable or illustrious, could stand a comparison with such a plea, having its own inherent excellence in the foundation on which we are to place the claims of religion upon the regard and affections of mankind; it seems to be rather a duty than otherwise to allow no

proper opportunity to pass without being used to exhibit and enforce this excellence, or at least to give our testimony on the side of religion with courtesy and firmness should the occasion demand it. Those other things which are esteemed most amongst mankind are subjected to a similar rule. If we see a man distinguished among his fellow-men for purity and uprightness of character; and if any doubt be suggested or expressed, we meet the doubt with facts, and we silence the doubter with demonstration; or at all events, until we are convinced that there are not sufficient grounds for an unfavourable opinion, we defend the absent. When projects are started for the promotion of national welfare, or the augmentation of man's happiness in any other respect, our first inquiry, if we act rationally or philosophically is, not so much, By whom is this commended? as, How far does it commend itself? not so much, Who has lauded it? as, Can we see, and can we show to others, sufficient grounds for our approval? We subject the precious metals, before we permit them to pass current among us, to tests which are close and scrutinizing in proportion to their value, so that all that is set forth as sound and excellent is customarily examined and discussed with a care and diligence ascertain-

able by the place of esteem and confidence, or value, to which it is supposed or asserted to have a title.

If this then be a fair mode of reasoning (and it seems to me most just and forcible), it certainly goes very far towards condemning the practice of many who, although they are worthy of esteem and regard as Christians, yet, when objections are started to the general principles of religion, shrink from all discussion and explanation, and, perhaps, leave an impression upon the mind of the objector that his doubts are grounded upon a surer basis than that on which they really rest. It is true, indeed, that there is a sort of argument concerning religion which is pointedly condemned in Scripture, that profitless contention which the apostle designates as "Vain babblings and oppositions of science, falsely so called;" that unworthy disputation which sometimes takes place among those who themselves profess to be believers, but who are separated from each other by differences, which have their rise, not in any hesitation of credence in the Divine origin of the Gospel, but in the fact that some of its parts may be variously interpreted. These disputes are most injurious to the interests of religion, and they furnish its enemies with the strongest shafts which can be levelled against it; but while these



are to be censured,—and, indeed, are thus clearly condemned in Scripture,—it is observable, that the sacred writings seem to place argument with those who avow themselves infidel on a footing altogether different—yet not without some exception; for in cases where there is a manifest reluctance to submit to reason, and where there is an evident determination to reject the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine which is according to godliness, St. Paul denounces such men, and such cavillings, and suggests that we should withdraw ourselves from disputings, which he styles perverse, and from men of whom he affirms, that they are of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth. This limitation, however, does not affect that class of reasonings on the ground of our faith which may arise from a sincere desire in a mind which has not yet received the truth, to know how far the objections to it are capable of refutation.

It is suggested to us by an inspired penman that we should be always ready to give an answer to every man that asketh us a reason of the hope that is in us,—this opens out the widest door to satisfactory explanations, and it presents a duty to us. It is sometimes very convenient to take a proud position, and to say when an objection is started against Christianity, I would not con-

descend to reply to it; but few calculate on the evil that may arise from such a mode of repelling opposition. We can form little conception of it while our ideas of men and manners are confined to what is to be seen in comparatively small communities, or wherever there are but limited opportunities of intercourse with the centres of civilization and society in our own and other countries. Even the best of our provincial towns will not always afford an adequate miniature representation of what may be emphatically called society. The social classes to be found in them consist, for the most part, only of those who are bound to each place by the ties of limited property, or of commercial engagements, or else of persons who are in still less favoured circumstances; these can never see or know mankind, a circumstance which, however, has in some measure its good as well as its inconvenience and disadvantage.

In a community so constituted there is almost always a sort of moral bond which binds the people to that external conformity to religion, or at least to that apparent deference to its claims on our respect, which would lead a stranger or a superficial observer to conclude, that all, without exception, were more or less Christian people; in such a place scarcely any man belonging to the community, and perhaps few strangers, if any, would

venture in a public company to speak openly against religion : whoever might attempt it would be certain of being surrounded by a majority who would at once unite to silence him ; and therefore we seldom hear of an instance of such daring now. There are very few circles of society, except in the metropolis, or abroad, where this does not hold good ; so that, in fact, but little room is given for conversation which implies a doubt of the truth of the Christian religion. I do not mean to include in my notion of society, any other sort of intercourse between the inhabitants of any place or its occasional residents with each other, than that which takes place between them according to the usual course of acquaintanceship in their own houses, and in the several grades into which they may be distributed.

Now this fact, that there is a kind of secret understanding, that if we do not come out in any cordial or open way to profess or advocate religion, it is, at all events, never to be spoken of in a disrespectful manner, will in some degree account for that horror, real or affected, which so many express habitually when they hear of Infidel opinions being broached ; but still there is cause to fear, that everywhere there might be found, did opportunity only serve to call them out into notice, a greater number of persons than is

supposed, who although at present they cannot speak openly against religion, yet are under the influence of secret unbelief. I know of no other way in which I can account for what I daily witness wherever I go. An examination into the habits and tastes and feelings of the population of any town in the empire, so far as they can be ascertained by general conduct, would go very far to prove, that multitudes live as if there were no God.

Let me imagine myself looking into its principal congregation assembling for religious worship; I will suppose it to consist of a thousand persons from all grades of society which exist within in its population. Let me reckon up the drunkards, the swearers, the persons who are dishonest in trade, those who are disobedient or unkind to parents, those who are bad masters, bad servants; those who break the Sabbath; those who are at variance with others without a sufficient cause, or who, having had a reason for difference, are unwilling that it should be removed; those who frequent the Church services and insult Almighty God by their misconduct in the church, which is a far greater sin than to be absent entirely; those who eat and drink too much; those who set their hearts upon extravagant and sometimes very ridiculous dress; those who spend their time and fritter away their intellect in

reading bad or frivolous books; those who look for the enjoyment of life in the pursuit of amusements which are either silly, and so unworthy of man dignified by reason, or destructive of health and ruinous to peace, contentment, and piety, and productive of an example which ruins thousands; those who are discontented in the condition of life to which Providence has called them, or those who are envious and malicious in their feelings and conduct towards others; those who have never once read through the Bible, though they may have read many other books, and these perhaps of a pernicious tendency; those who live entirely without prayer; those who never receive the Lord's Supper as he commanded, or who unworthily partake of it; if all these were to be taken out of the supposed thousand, they who know any large congregation would be afraid to pronounce the word which would declare the number remaining. Some may have committed many of these sins together; some may only offend in one particular matter;—but the numbers who would be found guilty would surprise every one who could enter with accuracy upon the computation.

To what am I to attribute this? Some will say, perhaps, that it is wrong to attribute it to the cause which I have stated; they will argue that

such a state of things does not necessarily imply a want of belief in revelation, but simply proves that, although we may be convinced in our understanding that the evidences of religion are sound and sufficient, yet the effects of the fall in opening our hearts to the access of corruption, and consequently in tending to our demoralization, are to be expected to prevail in every community, notwithstanding the convictions of reason.

Now this is quite true to a certain extent, but there is a point at which it becomes extremely doubtful. Let us take up any one or more of those instances of open sin which have been enumerated, and endeavour to discover if we can, supposing we have no previous knowledge of the individual, whether his transgressing in those particulars in which he is found to be an offender springs from unbelief or from frailty; who will be able to pronounce from which cause the conduct deplored arises? There are no means of ascertaining, except by admissions made by himself. If you enter into conversation with him, it will be found, perhaps, in almost every second case, if not in far more, that the person has been but badly instructed in the principles of religion; that he has not been disciplined in its grounds and evidences; and that, although from childhood he may have acquired a sort of superstitious fear, which

tells him it would be wrong not to believe in the Gospel, yet this fear to disbelieve does not equally operate to deter from disobeying; so that the whole of the man's concern with religion is no more than a balance between ungrounded superstition and unchecked appetite; and what is this but a form of unbelief? In such a man, and the world is full of them, in all ranks and in all sects, the principles of unbelief may not be apparent to observers, nay, they may, in some measure, conceal themselves from himself, but still there they are. Many cases, however, occur in which there can be scarcely any difficulty of ascertaining that there is a rejection of Christianity,—these appear openly, where circumstances are favourable to the development of principles opposed to religion. It is by no means uncommon to meet with Infidel objections from men of refined taste and highly cultivated minds, who are to be found in almost every social circle in the great emporium of literature and manners (as it is also of principles, and of all that under their guidance engrosses man's interest and energies); and why should not truth have a witness to testify for her wherever she is assailed? Whether I meet this in a great or in an humble circle,—whether its unhappy author dazzle me with his splendour in the vicinity of a court, or obtrude

himself upon my notice in a country village, have I not the same right to defend my faith that another man has to attack it ? There is no reason why I should shrink from an examination of it before any tribunal, or by any tests, or in any place ; more especially as I can in nearly every instance of its assailment, if I have but moderately studied it myself, show that its adversaries, when they are sincere in their assertions, have made them without having become sufficiently acquainted themselves with that which they oppose, and often speak against it more because they do not comprehend it, than because they could confute or dislike it if rightly understood by them.

There are, indeed, no arguments against Christianity to be found in the writings of its opponents, however intellectual or learned they have proved themselves, which have not been again and again met with triumph ; and why should any forbear to employ the faculties which his heavenly Creator has bestowed upon him, and the information which they have enabled him to possess in vindicating the truth and honour, and in setting forth the excellency of this holy Gospel ? I hold it to be the duty, as it ought to be the pleasure, of every Christian man and woman, in a faithful spirit and with that mixture of firmness and complacency and consideration for



the infirmities of others, which gives double power to every real servant of Christ, to put down wherever they meet it in society the disposition to bring religion into contempt, or to subject it to ridicule. I should feel myself dishonoured for ever, did I permit any miserable opponent of revealed truth to level his shafts against her with impunity; and although I might be but a very feeble instrument in the accomplishment of such a work, as putting him to silence, yet would I not fear that evil should happen to the Gospel from my advocacy of it, but rather believe that God would own and approve whatever effort I might make to defend it.

We find in the second epistle of St. Peter a remarkable instance of the manner in which an inspired writer deemed it right to notice, and to expose the arguments of Infidel objectors, and to point out how they are to be met. It would have been easy for that apostle either to have passed over this subject entirely, or to have treated the objectors with contempt; but he deems it wiser and safer to take up the arguments, and to show that there is no power in them. Among other matters in this epistle he warns the Church of God against the pernicious influence of men who should arise within its bosom to spoil the peace and to sink the hope of the

believer. Of all the forms in which the corruption of our nature appears, surely cold-blooded Infidelity is the most revolting, even though it may not lead man into any gross violations of morality. There is no monster more to be dreaded than the refined Infidel, he is indeed a wolf in sheep's clothing. Let me but reflect for a moment upon what his doctrine does for the world! what glorious themes are those which occupied the tongues and pens and gave exultation to the hearts of prophets and kings and many righteous men of old in prospect of the Messiah's Kingdom! What blessed fruits have holy men who penned the sacred books of the New Testament described as coming from the Saviour's finished work! Who that knows the low and bitter condition of man in his unrepented and unpardoned sin; who that thinks of minds estranged from God, consciences accusing, hearts condemning; who that is familiar with such consequences of sin as alienation and hatred among friends, domestic love and peace gone, the disruption of the social bond, man, the victim of foul passions, sunk into a degradation unworthy of his original nature and destiny; who that thinks upon this, and much more of the same kind, and then reflects upon the transforming and renewing power of grace, the change of heart, the amend-

ment of life, the return of happiness in the quietness of conscience, in the allayment of fears, in the perfect restoration of the whole man to a state in which God is his delight, intercourse with Christian people his consolation, heaven his hope, and earth but a strange country through which he is passing, with all the consciousness that he is a noble and an immortal being. Who that thinks, however momentarily, on these things, will not join in a heartfelt condemnation of the Infidel?

What does Infidelity effect for man? All it proposes is nothing better than to degrade him, to class him with the beasts that perish, to deny that there is in him that undying principle which constitutes the foundation of his reason, and the mark of his excellency over the rest of all God's creatures. Take away immortality from me, and what am I? There is no further account of me when my breath is gone; I crumble into the dust; I lie down with the brute creation; I have no more to look for; persuade me of this, and you have gone far towards making me a profligate. If I am convinced of this, will not my temptations to throw down the reins of self-denial acquire the greatest amount of force? I will eat and I will drink from the presumption that I have no soul which can receive damage from the indulgences of the body; I will be more inclined than I could be

in any other possible circumstances to gratify myself in all that I desire; convince me that there is no account required beyond the grave, no responsibility, no retribution, and you arm me with the strongest inducements to be not only a profligate, but in almost every way an unprincipled man.

I know of no doctrine that militates more against good order and all the interests of man as a social being than that set of opinions which we style Infidelity. Convince me that they are true, and unless I am one in ten thousand, you immediately overturn my honesty. If I do not believe in another world and its sanctions, and that there is an almighty, eternal, and just God to meet me and to assign me my portion for ever, according to the deeds that are done in the body, I am released from every fear but the fear of man. I am unapprehensive of any consequence but the penalties which human laws propose to inflict. But why should I fear man when I fear not his Maker? and why should I dread the denunciations of human laws when so many have successfully evaded or violated them? Make me an Infidel, and you set me upon the exercise of my ingenuity to circumvent my brother; to go beyond him, and to upset him. Make me an Infidel, and there is nothing too great for my cupidity to claim, too sacred for my love of self to tempt me

to lay my hands upon. Make me an Infidel, and no man's character, property, or life is safe in my hands, except so far as I may think that I am unable to escape from the grasp of human laws, or as I think I ought to obey them.

The history of the first temptation shows that the greatest enemy of mankind deems the infusion of Infidelity into the heart a work of primary importance to him. To make man once disbelieve or doubt God is quite enough for all the purposes of Satan. God said, "Ye shall surely die;" but the serpent said, "Ye shall not surely die." The Word of God says, that "The Lord Jesus shall come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe." The scoffer says openly, and many others say in their hearts, "Where is the promise of his coming? Why is it not fulfilled? Why has he not appeared?" This objection St. Peter exposes. He shows that it rests upon false premises, because all things had not remained as they were from the beginning. Promises and threats affecting the state of the earth and the condition of mankind had been uttered, and had been fulfilled already; the flood had come and taken away a wicked generation, it had swept the world with its desolations, and with an awful scourge vindicated the honour and the truth of God. He who thus

made good his word had, moreover, made further declarations which the same power would in the same way bring to pass. The new face of things which had arisen since the flood was to be subjected to destruction also—that destruction was to come as a thief in the night. Before the flood there was a warning; but now there was to be no warning. The heavens were now to pass away with a great noise, and the elements to melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and all the works that are therein to be burned up.

The objection of the scoffer is admirably retorted upon himself. He argues from the experience of the past that there is no reason to expect the fulfilment of the promise of Christ's coming. His proof of this is not a fact; but the very reverse of it is true. God did promise and threaten, and all was fulfilled before, so that if experience of the past be an effective argument, it proves that there is the utmost probability,—a probability that ends in moral certainty, that Christ will come; for this, says he, "They willingly are ignorant of that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water, whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished; but the heavens and earth, which are now by the same word, are kept in store, reserved unto fire

against the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men." Having thus retorted the argument of the free-thinker, this sacred writer still further engages himself in its refutation. He seems to suppose for argument's sake, that there had been no flood, and that all things had really continued as they were from the beginning of the world. What though they had? Was this a proof that God had forgotten? Was this alleged to show that God had allowed the system of the world to remain so long in one state that it was now too late to change it to another? Such an argument was founded upon ignorance of the nature of God. Time makes no difference with God; the whole circle of duration revolves in his eye; there is no past or future with him; all is present; a space of a thousand years is comparatively nothing,—it is as a day; and yet even a day is of importance with him; for it is allowed its place in the aggregate of numerical parts which compose time, it even stands as a thousand years; therefore, no argument derived from the lapse of time can tell upon the subject in hand. He then asserts the fact, that God is not slack concerning his promises. He is not slow to perform them on account of any other cause than this, that he is a God of forbearance,—this is the true reason why God gives time. He is full of pity; man,

the crowning work of his creation ; man, the lord of all the other creatures ; man, moulded in the heavenly image and likeness ; man, standing erect to heaven ; man, amid all his depravity, and all his sorrows, is ever an object of compassion with God. What heartlessness in man to ascribe his Creator's unwillingness to destroy his creatures to a want of ability to perform his word !

Such is St. Peter's method of analyzing the argument of an Infidel, it is an excellent model for us ; weak as that argument was, he did not leave it unnoticed, nor can we, I conceive, fulfil our duty to our heavenly Master without preparing ourselves to defend our most holy faith, wherever and whenever it is assailed. I am no advocate for what is called religious disputation, particularly amongst the laity, nor have I ever known much benefit to follow, while many evils have resulted from angry personal controversy ; what I now speak of is altogether different—it is a duty which belongs to all who profess and call themselves Christians to defend the principles of their common Christianity. When the question is, not what particular form of the Christian religion is most in accordance with Scripture, but whether all Scripture and all religion should be cried down, then we may say of him who allows the Gospel to remain defenceless, as an eminent and devoted servant of



Christ in a dignified station said of the dissolute professor,\* "He wants the life of religion, and might as reasonably be called an archangel as a Christian." Nor should timidity be suffered to prevent us from the fulfilment of a duty so important, or a false modesty restrain us from undertaking what may seem presumptuous in a private Christian. I firmly believe that this argument from the past is valueless. I know that before the impugnment of revelation can hope for credence with men who think, he must show that he has thought and examined himself; he must either disprove the authority of Scripture from means accessible already to all, or he must prove that some new light has been thrown upon his mind, with which others have not been favoured; that he has access to sources of authentic and specific intelligence upon the attributes of Deity, distinct from those of written revelation. I know that his bare expression of dissent, or the mere persuasions of his mind, are not sufficient to establish his positions, however forcible or decided they may be. The operations of the most gifted intellect, without facts of telling power as its material to work upon, are as nothing in a matter of so much moment as all this. I know that the dearest interests of the whole human race are

\* The Lord Chief Justice Hale.

involved in the issue of this question ; that the salvation of all the millions of successive generations, past and future, is suspended upon it ; that the very character of God (if I may venture without irreverence to clothe such a thought in words) depends upon it ; “ Let God be true and every man a liar,” is a maxim that must be reversed, if the theories of the Infidel stand. I know that Christianity is an imposture, the Bible is a forgery, if they are true. That the wisest and the holiest men who have been since the world began have all been deceived themselves, and were deceivers of others. I am aware that these theories cannot be established until the Infidel has invalidated the whole chain of unfulfilled prophecy, by proving some one or more predictions to have failed ; until he has destroyed the evidence of those miracles which God appointed to be the means of convincing man’s judgment of the Divine origin of revelation ; until he break down the authenticity of collateral profane history, and prove that it is to be disbelieved as well as sacred : for the testimony by which it is sought to prove the genuineness of the former, is almost completely parallel or identical with that which substantiates the latter.

Now, if my mind be solemnly impressed with all this, I must forget timidity, and I must dis-

regard the imputation of a want of modesty when a due occasion arrives ; I must be zealous for the honour of my heavenly King ; I must silence the gainsayer, by casting aside the dread of consequences to myself ; and by speaking freely, affectionately, and firmly, remembering, that, as a Christian fulfilling my duty, I must not dare to be abashed when my heavenly Master's truth and dignity are disparaged or ridiculed ; nor for a moment allow myself to forget how expressly my duty is prescribed to me in the words which he has addressed to all,—“ Whosoever is ashamed of me and of my words, in this sinful and adulterous generation, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed when he cometh in his kingdom.”

## THE LORD'S SUPPER.

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The Old Testament directed man's thoughts to the Divine Author of the atonement—The New inculcates the remembrance of his glorious work.—The adaptation of the Lord's Supper to this purpose.—A statement of the nature and efficacy of this Sacrament.—Inventions and speculations of men in relation to it.—Approaches to Romanism by the Tractarians in their views of it.—The danger of a position between the Church of Rome and the Protestant Churches.—Our Lord's language and acts at the Last Supper did not indicate it to be a sacrifice for sins.

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To direct the thoughts of man to the Divine Author of the atonement was the grand work of Old Testament times. The first coming of the Messiah found an early place in the sacred records of the Church. The bruising of the serpent's head was soon announced as an event to be expected, and dark as were some of those intimations which from time to time appeared in revelation on the subject of Messiah's kingdom and power and glory, there is a distinctness and an emphasis, as

well as a fulness, in this, which leaves us little room to doubt that the more spiritual Jews not only comprehended the general truth of redemption through the Messiah, but possessed especial knowledge of the doctrine of the Incarnation.

The recorded fact of man's destruction by the subtlety of the serpent, and his expulsion from the felicity and abundance of Eden to the misery and barrenness of the earth, yet uncultivated, would carry down from generation to generation a deep abhorrence of the author of evil; and the accompaniment of that record by a promise so gracious as that a being should be found manifest in the flesh, not only unfallen before the author of human wretchedness, but standing over him as a prostrate enemy, and placing his heel upon his head to crush it, destroying his works and his power for ever, and restoring man to the favour and presence of his justly-offended Maker, would no doubt cherish in many a mind the most reverential and grateful thoughts of the supreme Lord of heaven and earth. This promise was renewed in many forms, the event to which it pointed was the subject of various types, it was announced by the prophets, expected by the patriarchs, longed for by all the holy men of old, whether those who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, or

those who, though they had not the Divine gift of prophecy, yet walked before the Lord blameless, under the guidance of the same blessed Spirit, in the use of such ordinances as they were privileged to possess. Almost every act done by the Jewish people in the service of God was more or less significant of the expected arrival; through all their generations, and in the midst of all their backslidings and infidelity, they clung to this blissful expectation: they pictured to themselves a golden age when Messiah should come, and they thought they beheld in his glorious advent as its time approached the downfall of every Gentile power. Visions of their national supremacy, mixed up with the stimulating hope of personal aggrandizement, occupied every mind, and thus by their very failings and mistakes and sins, no less than by their principles, their prophecies, and their duties, did they keep alive the hope of a coming Deliverer. The Jews were so well known to every other nation, and the outlines of their religion were so generally understood, that this expectation of theirs was by no means concealed from the other inhabitants of the world; all who took any interest in public events were well acquainted with it, and speculations on the political prospects of the world, and upon the respective relations and positions of different powers likely

to be established, originating in the Jewish hope of a great temporal ruler, were uppermost in the minds alike of the Gentile and the Jew. And as the past dispensation pointed to a Divine Deliverer, so it is the chief business of that under which we now live to raise the banner of the cross, till it float proudly over all nations, and kindreds, and people ; and to hand down from generation to generation the recollections, the duties, and the hopes connected with his glorious work as the incarnate Son of God, bleeding on Calvary for the redemption of our race. It is ours to spread the oracles of His truth before the mind of man, so that it may be led in a reflex as well as in a prospective line, and by the constant commemoration of a dying Saviour's love, not only to look for the special blessings of Divine grace, but to express to an expecting world—for the world is now looking for an enlargement of Christ's kingdom—both the value of his death, and the power and consequence of his life. Now of all the parts of revealed religion, there is none which can at once more simply or effectually promote these ends, or sustain our souls by spiritual consolation and refreshment in the recollection of them, than the Lord's Supper, which, indeed, was instituted for the very purpose ; and yet there is no topic which has been a more

fruitful source of painful and sinful controversy not only between ourselves and the members of the Church of Rome, but between Protestants.

The latitude which individual writers have often allowed themselves upon this subject, the habit of accumulating human authorities, the affectation of an antiquity which falls short of the full age of Bible times, added to that proneness in man to exalt himself and all his doings more particularly in the services of religion, have combined to perplex and to disturb the mind with endless theories, on that which, of all other duties, seems to have been intended as a special means of imparting peace and consolation. They who are present at the holy table are engaged in a series of acts which do certainly speak with an eloquent significancy the sublime doctrine of salvation by atonement in the body and blood of our Lord as it was accomplished on the cross; and had the restless spirit of man remained satisfied with the simple use of Scripture example in the matter of this heavenly feast, we should now have been enjoying all its comforts and blessings without alloy.

The simple ordinance which we fulfil in the use of bread and wine in the administration of this



sacrament does, indeed, in a manner that may be called Divine and heavenly, console, instruct, and edify us; it points to the source of life; it comforts those who approach in penitence and faith, by a lively remembrance of that unparalleled love which called forth the Lord Jesus from his glory in heaven, that he might be led as a lamb to the slaughter, that his precious blood might wash away the sin of the world. It fills them with holy resolution to live as humbly and faithfully as their measure of grace may enable them; and gives them an opportunity of offering up in gratitude, the only sacrifices we can or dare now innocently present, the sacrifice of ourselves, our souls, and bodies, and of praise and thanksgiving,\*—there the soul of the believer is strengthened and refreshed; and besides these ends, which are personal to the believers themselves, they accomplish that other purpose which belongs to this sacrament, for every communicant who is a devout partaker of what thus strengthens and refreshes the soul, takes part also, in that which

\* "When the old Fathers called the Mass, or Supper of the Lord, a sacrifice, they meant that it was a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, and so as well the people as the priest do sacrifice."—Archbishop Cranmer's "Defence of the Sacrament." 1550, c. 15, fol. 115.

"shews the Lord's death till he come."\* That event is thus proclaimed, until the period when he will be seen once more, and then, in all the vigour of his indestructible life, and in all the plenitude of his boundless power, and so this ordinance becomes a principal and an unintermitted means of promoting and perpetuating the Christian religion; and as it thus preaches Christ crucified to the world, they are but cold Christians who do not feel an impulse, if only in this consideration, to crowd around the table, seeing in it an imperative call of duty to every child of God, and to every Church. By the right use of baptism we are externally, at least, unless we renounce it, members of the Church of Christ; but if we do not go on to the use of the other sacrament when under ordinary circumstances it can be had, we are only invested with the style and dignity of a character, from the duties and responsibilities and privileges of which we alike shrink, and having done so, all the benefit must eventually be forfeited. The whole Christian religion may be summed up in these words, which we find in the

\* The word "shew" in the authorized version (1 Cor. xi. 26) is used there in the antiquated sense "announce;" it does not imply "representation," though often interpreted so. The doctrine of representation is founded on the words, "this is my body," &c.

Bible, "looking unto Jesus;" but if we close our eyes when once we are baptized; if we consider not the counsels of his written word, in which his authorized and inspired servants speak to us, though dead themselves, his gracious will; if we studiously put away from us every mark by which we can be distinguished as his soldiers; if we project and work out our system of social existence on such a principle as to escape as far as is possible from what may be, and what are by many, sinfully deemed the inconveniences of religion, and shun the Lord's table because it involves us in pledges to holiness which are inconsistent with the latitude we allow to ourselves in moral demeanour, and blot out of the mind for long spaces of time those thoughts of a coming Saviour which the preparation for that table and the approach to it are certain to create, we are refusing to receive an eminent assistance in our religious life which was ordained by Christ himself; and thus we are not only neglecting our own duty, and setting at nought our own hopes, but we are marring the duty of the Church at large, whose office it is to profess Christ publicly by the due celebration of this rite in the persons of her members. Nor must I dare to entertain the thought that, if I persevere thus to act, there is any way in which I can balance or make amends

for this deficiency ; I must give up my sinful conduct and come back to God and to his ordinances.

I do not know with what pretensions to the name or character of believers they can hope to appear before Christ at the last day, who live and die in a Christian Church making it a matter of decided choice to present themselves at his table never if possible, or if some attendance be unavoidable, scarcely ever, and thus, as far as the influence of their acts is concerned, blotting out, rather than preserving, the memory of His death. There is every allowance made in the provisions of the Gospel for ignorance and incapacity, but for those who know better to trample under foot, from whatever motive, a plain command, and that a command involving a duty without the performance of which we are deprived of one of the chief distinctive marks of Christians, is tantamount to a rejection of Christianity rightly interpreted, and as such is a species of Infidelity ; and yet I can find no expressions sufficiently serious and weighty to employ in stating the unscriptural and dangerous character of the following sentiment of the Tractarians, adopted from Basil :—" Often communion of that body which was broken, and that blood which was shed for the remission of sins, is manifold remission of those sins over which he

mourns.”\* They who grow up to man’s estate in a Christian community, and never draw near the table of the Lord, are in a condition which, if we judge from the plain letter of Scripture, we are compelled to designate in terms which sound uncharitably. And yet it is to be remembered that it is decidedly wrong that our presence at the Supper of the Lord should be more in the way of a necessity, than of participating in a rite which gives pleasure and hope and courage to those who rightly understand and heartily engage in it. There is often a struggle between the world and religion for the possession of a man’s feelings and affections. Conscience suggests duties, but that evil spirit who fans the flame of every baleful passion that lurks in the unrenewed breast carries on his counterplot, and conscience is either entirely silenced or else so far prevailed over that its owner enters upon every service with a mind dull and uninterested, if not actually possessed by what is bad and unfitted for what is good. But language has no power to express, neither has any mind the compass to comprehend, except the mind that has been enlightened by the Holy Spirit and led by Him to the heavenly banquet, what true joy is there. They who are often there in a proper state have many blessings—what personal comfort!

\* Page 27 of Sermon, quoted in page 276 of this book.

How often have the trials and sorrows of the world we live in found their best alleviation in that reasonable and happy service. How often has it, with a power peculiar to itself, opened out to the mind of the contemplative Christian the boundless glory that awaits the redeemed servants of the Most High? How often have we felt ourselves as we returned to our homes from the delightful duty filled with holy resolutions, animated by a brightened hope, and willing to go on fearlessly and faithfully though humbly in every good work? Have we not often felt impelled as we came from the same commemoration to be conductors to others of the blessings and mercies of which we have been tasting ourselves, and which our knowledge of Christ has brought to us? It is indeed a sweet and precious provision made by Almighty love for the strengthening and refreshing of our souls.

Happy would it have been had our minds never been distracted by the inventions and disputes of men who wasted time, unprofitably employed intellect, gathered and disseminated learning, all for the purpose of engrafting upon the plain Word of God a number of doctrines and practices connected with this sacrament which perplex the mind, overpower the memory, darken God's truth, substitute scholastic notions of a

carnal body for the invisible life-giving God, and rob us of our happiness. A large proportion of the writers of the Church of England, as well of other Churches here and abroad, have indulged too freely in these speculations, but they all fall short of the ground taken by the Tractarians, who form a distinct school of theology. The eighty-first Tract, and a sermon just preached and published at Oxford, the author of which has been, by reason of its doctrine, prohibited from preaching within the precincts of that University for two years, are full of proof of this; these two documents have, to a certain extent, the support of a large number of English divines, whom they quote; but it is clear from the citations made in each that in one point, which constitutes a chief peculiarity of the new school, they have no support. They are well sustained, so far as similarity of sentiment is strength, in all that does not go to form the distinctive character of the Tractarian doctrine, as opposed to all other divinity, but further they seem to look in vain for help.\*

\* The Tractarians thus state their views :—"The Eucharist then, according to them (the members of the early Church, see page 4), consisted of two parts,—a commemorative sacrifice and a 'communion,' or communication; the former obtaining remission of sins for the Church, the communion, the strengthening and refreshing of the soul, although inas-

Their peculiar notions upon this sacrament are, that it obtains remission of sins for the Church,

much as it united the believer with Christ, it indirectly conveyed remission of sins too."—Tract 81, pages 5 and 6.

"Lastly (see page 6), they felt assured that this sacrifice, offered by the Church on earth for the whole Church, conveyed to that portion of the Church which had passed into the unseen world, such benefits of Christ's death as (their conflicts over and they in rest) were still applicable to them."—"They comforted themselves, that being according to the will of God it must in some way be of benefit to them."—Ibid. p. 7. See also quotation in page 276 of this book.

"It is, then, to use our technical phraseology, a commemorative *impetratory* sacrifice, which is all one with saying, that it is well-pleasing to God, for what is well-pleasing to him, how should it not bring down blessings upon us?"—Tract 81, page 5.

The word "*impetratory*," which the Tractarians thus speak of as *our* technical language, belongs more to Rome than to us, as will be evident from the following extract from a popular Roman Catholic book.

"The most holy and adorable sacrifice of the Mass is the greatest of all mysteries, and the supreme act of our religion; it is a sacrifice which our Saviour Jesus Christ has instituted; wherein, by the real oblation of his body and blood,—1, we give God the greatest honour he can receive; 2, we worthily return him thanks for his benefits; 3, we render him propitious in pardoning our offences; 4, we obtain his grace and favour. What the ancient laws did by four kinds of sacrifices, we perform in a more perfect manner by this alone, which is altogether *latreutic*, that is, honouring God; *eucharistic*, that



and that there is a provision therein for the benefit of the departed saints, from an accumulation of advantages arising out of it, over and above the individual benefit derived from it by each communicant. The celebrated and authoritatively censured sermon referred to was written expressly to support these two opinions, to the statements upon which it adds a few arguments on frequent communion; of course, these doctrines are founded on the idea, that there is a material sacrifice in the offering of the bread and wine in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and that notion of sacrifice is built upon an erroneous view of Christ's presence therein. How near they go to Rome, and yet how they affect to start back from her in horror! She says, the bread and wine are changed into a whole living perfect Christ, they only say that these become the body and blood of Christ. She says, she takes the words of Christ literally. They take them literally too, but do not allow the letter to mean so much as she does; believing, that in the literal signification of the words there is a mystery, they "adore"\* it,

is, giving thanks to God; propitiatory, and impetratory." — "The Instruction of Youth in Christian Piety," from the French of the Rev. Charles Gobbinet, D.D.

\* See preface and appendix to Dr. Pusey's sermon, who adopts the words of Bishop Andrews, "I learned also to

and yet they reject the adoration of the Host. She says, here is a sacrifice and propitiation for the living and the dead. They hesitate in what degree to allow the sacrifice, or to speak of the propitiation, but still they hold both in a modified sense, and like her believe them to be good both for those that now live, to procure remission of sins for them, and for those who are dead, to obtain an enlargement of their satisfactions for them! They say, indeed, that on account of Transubstantiation, their view of a sacrifice must be different from that of Rome.\* What their view may really amount to I shall not here discuss, but I must direct the attention of the reader to the wisdom of the compilers of our Liturgy, in holding us free from all the unsafe and uncertain notions which have been scattered abroad by theologians on this subject.

withhold my thoughts as to the mode of this great mystery, 'but as a mystery' to 'adore it.'—Preface, page 5.

"Furthermore," says Latimer, "in the first Supper, celebrated of Christ himself, there is no mention made of adoration in the elements, who said, 'Eat ye and drink ye,' not worship ye; therefore, against adoration may be spoken that saying of Christ concerning divorce, 'from the beginning it was not so.'"—Works of Bishop Ridley. London, 1841, page 106.

\* "The doctrine of the sacrifice cannot be the same, where Transubstantiation is held and where it is not."—Tract 81, page 47.

The Reformers state in the Communion Service the object of this ordinance. They call it the most comfortable sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, and say, that it is to be received in remembrance of Christ's meritorious cross and passion; no announcement of a material sacrifice; no proclamation as to forgiveness of sins; no talk of benefit for the dead are found in the invitations. This service is scriptural; it neither introduces notions not to be found in revelation nor speculations built upon a mystical exposition of its letter; it gives no room for men's traditions and fancies. Without any low view of this sacred rite, without any but the most reverential and exalting feelings as to its benefits and blessings, I must demand my liberty to believe nothing concerning it which cannot be shown to me, either on the face of my Bible, or my prayer-book. I may not be required to go all the way to Rome, or to do in all respects as they do there, but that position I hold to be most unsafe. If I am neither entirely Protestant, nor entirely Romanist, I have neither the certainties which we Protestants claim, our high demonstrations of Gospel truth, our safe comparisons of Scripture with Scripture, our Divine anchorage in the grand law that the Scripture is the rule of faith; nor have I the benefit of that infallibility which Ro-

manism affords. If I throw myself beyond the Protestant confine, an alien from its doctrine, a rebel to its cause, an exile because of its Antiromanism, and if I then stumble at the threshold of the Roman Church, I set up my own judgment against the Scriptures, the Reformation, the Fathers, the Council of Trent, and I am at war with Christendom. How far the Tractarians in that part of their system which is peculiar to themselves have come short of this, let those who understand the subject judge.

The following statement, which is in truth a repudiation of these sober views of our prayer-book, though it may not in all minute particulars fully coincide with Romish doctrine, comes from the pen of a leading author of the Tracts when expatiating upon the benefits derived from this sacrament to the living and to the dead.

“Yet,” says the preacher, “although most which is spoken belongs to Christians, as belonging already to the household of saints, and the family of heaven, and the communion of angels, and unity with God; still here, as elsewhere in the New Testament, there is a subordinate and subdued notion of sin; and what wraps the saint already in the third heaven, may yet uphold us sinners, that the pit shut not her mouth on us. The same reality of

the Divine gift makes it angels' food to the saint, *the ransom to the sinner*, and both because it is the body and blood of Christ; were it *only* a thankful commemoration of his redeeming love, or only a showing forth of his death, or a strengthening only and refreshing of the soul, it were indeed a reasonable service; but *it would have no direct healing for the sinner*; to him his special joy is, that it is His blood which was shed for the remission of his sins."\*

\* "The Holy Eucharist a Comfort to the Penitent." By the Rev. E. B. Pusey, D.D. Oxford. 1843, p. 18.

How near this approaches to Rome, and how far it diverges from the doctrine of the great Reformers of the Church of England may be ascertained from the two following extracts.—The Catechism of the Council of Trent says, on the article of forgiveness of sins:—"But if we consider the ministers of this Divine power it will not seem so extended. For the Lord gave not the power of this holy gift to all, but only to the bishops and priests. The same thing is to be believed, as to the way or manner of exercising this power; *for by the sacraments only*, so that the form of them be kept, *sins may be forgiven*; but otherwise there is no power of absolving from sin given to the Church, whence it follows that the priests as well as the sacraments, are, as it were, instruments to the forgiveness of sins, by which Christ our Lord, who is the very author and giver of salvation, works in us forgiveness of sins and righteousness." Page 32. Edition, Dublin, 1816.

"Christ, as St. Paul writeth, made one perfect sacrifice for

I cannot hold the sacrament to be thus impetratory for the sinner, thus propitiatory for sin, because the New Testament, as quoted in the Sacramental Service says, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins." Christ is both the impetrator, and the propitiation himself. The whole divinity of the Church of England has been searched and quoted, both in the Eighty-first the sins of the whole world, neither can any man reiterate that sacrifice of his; and yet is the communion an acceptable sacrifice to God of praise and thanksgiving; but to say that thereby sins are taken away, (which wholly and perfectly was done by Christ's passion, of the which the communion is only a memory,) that is a great derogation of the merits of Christ's passion; for the sacrament was instituted, that we, receiving it, and thereby recognising and remembering his passion, should be partakers of the same; for otherwise, doth this sacrament take upon it the office of Christ's passion, whereby it might follow that Christ died in vain."—Ridley, Bishop of London, Martyr, in his examination before the Queen's Commissioners, September 30, 1555. On the 15th of October, following, he was degraded, and next day burned to death along with Bishop Latimer at Oxford, *for these opinions*. Ridley's character among the Reformers stands pre-eminently distinguished for wisdom and for learning as well as piety. It was said by one of his adversaries, "Latimer leaneth to Cranmer, Cranmer leaneth to Ridley, and Ridley leaneth to his own singular wit."—The Works of Nicholas Ridley, D.D., Cambridge, 1841—page 275, and (Biographical Sketch) page 12.

Tract and in the appendix to this sermon, for authorities, but they all fail to give support in this article—the remission of sins. Generally, indeed, the prayer is offered for us when at the communion, that our sinful bodies may be cleansed by Christ's body, and that we and all Christ's Church may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of his passion; but as it would seem, lest this should be interpreted as a foundation for special forgiveness of sins upon the mere act of receiving the elements whenever we approach the Lord's table, (which is to build a great superstructure upon a foundation so slender as only to excite ridicule in every masculine mind,) a prayer is added after the reception, most humbly beseeching God to grant by the merits and death of his Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood, that we all his whole Church may obtain remission of our sins! This is pardon by faith, not by the sacraments.\* We do not need to wait for sacraments to convey forgiveness of sins, nor indeed can it be safely said, that they who are uncertain as to how they stand with God as to pardon, are in a fit state to appear at the Lord's table. I should have expected some-

\* "See quotation from the Homily of Salvation, pages 92 and 93 of this book—also the references to the Homilies generally, pages 94 and 96."

what more of the principle of reserve here, and to have found that a course of penitence followed by a consciousness of forgiveness had been preparatory to an approach to the holy communion.\* Remission of sins is instantaneous, and is imparted to the penitent by the Lord of pardons and mercies independently even of the sacraments, which being only generally necessary to salvation, and not universally accessible, do not seem to have been intended for more than a strengthening and refreshing of the soul to such as have begun to feel the inward life of religion after they have sought and obtained forgiveness. The sins of all believers were, from all eternity,

\* Both the Church of Rome and the Tractarians agree that penitence and faith are pre-requisites for the Lord's Supper, but they differ in this that the former party have the separate sacrament of penance which the latter do not admit. The Romanists teach that only *venial* sins are forgiven at the Lord's table, but that "there is no wickedness, how grievous or heinous soever, which the sacrament of penance blots not out once and again and oftentimes." (Catechism of the Council of Trent.) The Tractarians say that this is too refined a distinction, and argue absolutely and unrestrictedly, that "this Divine sacrament" is "ulteriorly, the cleansing of our sins, the refining of our corruptions, the repairing of our decays."—Dr. Pusey's Sermon, page 27.

The doctrine of pardon, as held by the Church of England, is pardon by faith only, or in other words, justification by faith only, as stated in her Eleventh Article.



blotted out by the one grand sacrifice upon the Cross, and the pardon becomes personally applicable whenever we come truly to Christ by faith. The worst aspect, perhaps, in which the Roman Church can be viewed, is that in which she affords the opportunity to her people of frequent forgiveness of sins through a sacrament; nor could we hope for consequences of a better sort than are witnessed within her pale, were we to publish and support a doctrine which might induce men to make an appearance at the Lord's table for the purpose of looking for a repetition of pardons.

But how is it possible that such a notion can be maintained? Can it be that this bread and wine is a sacrifice for remission of sins, and that he who taught the ordinance to the disciples should never hint at that?\*

\* Our Saviour's statement at the institution of this sacrament, that his blood was shed for the remission of sins, have been very disingenuously put forth as arguments that there is remission of sins at the Lord's table. The following extracts are taken from "Conferences between Nicholas Ridley, and Hugh Latimer (Bishop of Worcester), during the time of their imprisonment."

Ridley says—"They pluck away the honour from the only sacrifice of Christ, whilst this sacramental and mass sacrifice is believed to be propitiatory, and such a one as purgeth the souls both of the quick and the dead. Contrary to that is written to the Hebrews, 'With one offering hath He made

this bread and wine are a sacrifice for the remission of sins, and that none of the Evangelists or writers of the New Testament should ever notice that circumstance? Is it possible that this bread and wine should be a sacrifice for the remission of sins, when even the sacred writers tell us that there is no more sacrifice for sins. If the praises and thanksgivings are a sacrifice, as the prayer following the Lord's Prayer after the delivery of the sacrament asserts, if the dedication of ourselves to God, as the same prayer states, be a reasonable sacrifice, we may feel assured that at the sacrament, though not in it, there is a sacrifice such as becomes Christians—a spiritual sacrifice perfect for ever them that are sanctified; and again, 'Where remission of these things (that is of sins) is, there is no more offering for sin.' "

Latimer.—"By his own person he hath purged our sins." These words, "by his own person," have an emphasis or vehemence which driveth away all sacrificing priests from such office of sacrificing, seeing that which he hath done by Himself, He hath not left to be perfected by others; so that the purging may more truly be thought past and done than a thing to come and to be done. If any man sin, &c. He saith not, let him have a priest at home to sacrifice for him, but, "we have an advocate," the virtue of whose one oblation endureth for ever. St. Paul saith, "They that serve the altar," &c. Even so, the Lord hath ordained that they which "preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel."—Works of Ridley, Cambridge, 1841, page 107.

fice ; but further than this we do not and we dare not go ; up to this point we have the Bible, we have the Reformers, we have the true saints of Christendom joined in one grand and irrefragable testimony, and we are satisfied. To go farther seems like tempting God.

So far the sincere milk of the Word has nourished our faith, which has grown thereby, and is established by a great cloud of witnesses ; so far, we have been instructed by the best masters on this holy sacrament, and we are well assured that we can never properly use it without deriving from it a resuscitation of whatever spiritual life is in us, and a re-invigoration of all our devotional capacities and aspirations, as well as that consciousness that our sins have been already blotted out, and that we enjoy a present salvation, which is the most blessed evidence to man of a justified and regenerated condition. To a merciful Saviour, therefore, we come, more especially in this privilege of access to his table, "as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious ; as lively stones built up, a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."

They may take the words of Christ literally, and say, they have a body and so a sacrifice ; but the words of Christ, as we are assured by himself,

were, "Spirit and life," and as such we take them;\* satisfied that we have the full benefit of them. Had the bread and wine, or anything with which they were to be miraculously charged, been intended as an offering in sacrifice to God, how different would our Lord's words and demeanour have been at the Last Supper? When he more nearly contemplated the real Sacrifice about to be offered—the sacrifice of himself; how he engaged in prayer—how he strove with God—how he commended those to the Father for whom he gave up his life. At those times his manner was doubly earnest, his very soul was stirred up, his blood was warmed,—it made its way in an unusual channel, teeming forth in perspiration over his throbbing temples, and falling from that cheek which never blushed or lost its colour at the consciousness of sin upon the feet so soon to be transfixed with nails upon the cross! But

• "To these" (inconsistencies in the Romish doctrine) "I might add many more; as how a thing can be said to be changed into another thing which did not exist before; how a body can be present in a place after the manner of a spirit? and yet this they affirm concerning the presence of Christ's body in the sacrament. One might as well say that snow is black, but not after the manner of blackness, but in the way of whiteness; which is to talk nonsense after the manner of sense."—Archbishop Tillotson on "The Rule of Faith," page 272.

at the final Supper, it will be observed, there were none of these ; they were reserved for those more private moments when Peter and James and John only were present. Our Lord was more anxious, to conclude his social intercourse with the twelve together, by showing them the end of all material sacrifices in the cessation of the offering of the paschal lamb, and to mark that event in their minds, by establishing pledges of his own love, as a token of remembrance and a means of communion to be left with his Church until memory should be lost in vision and in immediate comprehension, and communion be perfected by becoming a heavenly enjoyment instead of an earthly, than to impress upon their minds a thought so poor as that by their engaging themselves in presenting any gifts or oblations to God, such sacrifices could become impetratory, and obtain for them by any inherent value the whole or any part of those Divine blessings which the real sacrifice on the cross alone could secure. And although the breaking of the body and the shedding of the blood were signified and spoken of, yet, until we have more explicit and authoritative information than the Tractarians can furnish, we must believe that this was more in reference to the blessings which these were in the end to procure for all believers, and generally to

confer upon them through life, than for the purpose of instructing the apostles in a constant repetition, or imitation of an offering which Scripture plainly teaches us was only once to be offered, or in the continuation of a material sacrifice, while the same Scripture affirms that such sacrifices for sins are no longer to be.

## A DESIRE TO BE WITH CHRIST.

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The struggle of the mind against death—Paul's state of mind on the subject—The different motives by which men have been led to prefer death to life—Paul's special reasons for thinking it better to die—Reasons for the same which are universally applicable—1st, The Christian's love; 2d, Gratitude; 3d, The nature of society in heaven. There are many other reasons.

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WHEN first we read that sentiment of St. Paul, "Having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better," we all, I suppose, feel alike a repugnance to receive it with satisfaction. We naturally cling to life and to all its enjoyments. It has been said, that self-preservation is the first law of nature; and we see that it pervades all the animal creation. So far as this acts upon us we only obey the impulses and feelings which he who formed us implanted within us. He has designed that we should by all means cherish life, and he has consequently made it appear that to attempt to shorten our own span of existence, or to abridge that of others, has been classed by him amongst the most heinous crimes of which we

can be guilty. But God has assigned a period, beyond which our life on earth is not to be protracted; and he expects of us, that when that period arrives we shall exhibit no reluctance to restore life to Himself who conferred it, and to submit to those changes which are a part of his wise and providential arrangement. There are not many instances of a desire to leave the world into which we have been born; but among those which do present themselves there are examples of persons who have entertained that desire upon false grounds. There are some who can speak with truth, and say like the apostle, I am in a difficulty between two things, I have "a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better;" and I know that to continue upon earth is more needful for those who are to be the subjects of my interest and my care. Upon the motive of cherishing this desire there can be no question; in this example we see zeal for God's service, and love for the souls of men bearing down every other consideration. Few, if any, ever had such a heart in this way as St. Paul. He looked on himself as an instrument devoted to his Master's will, always ready for his work; no dangers could terrify him, no frowns could discourage him, no threats could intimidate him, no dungeons could wear out his zeal, no bonds or stripes



could stifle his voice of thanksgiving, or silence the outgoings of his prayer. What a magnanimous character he appears when we duly examine the sentiment which is the subject of this essay? His judgment had been long convinced that they who have their hearts and affections fixed upon the fleeting objects of time have fallen under a desperate infatuation. He had been taught by the high and solemn instructions of the Holy Spirit; and he had felt persuaded from the eloquent admonitions of a great experience, that of all the errors under the sun that is the greatest which makes us blind to the fact, that the destined place of our abode is not here. He had found that all is vanity, that every enjoyment, every possession, every prospect, every plan that man can propose to himself, even when unusually successful, gives place of necessity to the crowd of events which time is ever rapidly urging on, and that all is sooner or later at an end. He had discovered that it would be better, far better, not to be here at all; and yet, with all that desire to make the change that would end his sorrows, and establish his felicity for ever, he is content to remain in a state of almost unparalleled pain and persecution for the sake of serving God and saving souls. But while there are a few examples of those who, like this eminent apostle, have "a desire to depart

and to be with Christ," there are those who have anxieties to quit this scene, and to rush into the unexplored world to meet—they know not what; some have come to this fatal resolution from a defective intellect; and as the Gospel is propounded upon principles of reason combined with faith in such things above reason, as are avouched upon the express dictate of God, we have all grounds for the conclusion that such persons are accounted in the eye of the Almighty as dead, from the time when it was his will to withdraw from them the powers of the understanding; it is, however, I conceive, to be believed that at the final day of account, although not to be condemned for an act which originated in the loss of their reason, such persons will be judged, nevertheless, "according to the deeds done in the body" up to that period when the enjoyment and use of the intellectual powers was taken away. Some men have been impelled by their own wicked conduct towards their fellow-men to lay violent hands upon themselves, and to throw back upon their heavenly Father that precious gift of life which he had bestowed upon them, and which might have been employed to the attainment of the consolations of grace throughout our earthly pilgrimage, and of the glory, honour, and immortality to which it leads in the state of

heaven. They have, instead of being thus elevated to the best enjoyment of happiness, and to the power of diffusing many blessings around them, reduced themselves to the awful condition of men overtaken by the hands of justice, or trembling at the discovery of their guilt; and to evade the sentence pronounced by the law of man, or to avoid investigation, they have deliberately plunged into eternal misery! Others have done the same, with less appearance of guilt; but so far as we can judge from revelation, self-murder, irrespectively of the cause, seems to be at all times a crime of equal guilt when committed by men who have not up to the moment of its committal evinced any mental deficiency; it is either no crime at all, or it is a crime equally offensive to God under all circumstances, except in the case of absence of reason.

There are some, too, who because they have been disappointed in their speculations as to advancement in life, prefer not to live at all, because they cannot live as they choose, and thus exhibit a wild and unpardonable spirit of rebellion against the will of the Supreme Being, who called them into existence, or who, because they have found themselves unexpectedly implicated in engagements that once were practicable, but now cannot be fulfilled, have resolved, through the fear of

man, to do an act by which they prove plainly that they have no fear of God. How different all this from the principles and thoughts on this subject of interest to every man which prevail in the breasts of enlightened and sanctified Christians? they may not all be equally free from the natural apprehension of death; they may not all have the enjoyment of that consciousness of present peace and pardon which often comes to the believer; they may not all be gifted with that happy freedom of choice which could justify them in saying with Paul, "I have a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better;" but they all agree in this, that they would no more entertain the thought of renouncing life until they are summoned from their post by the great Captain of their salvation, than they would be accessory to shedding the blood of a fellow-being made in the image and likeness of God.

The Apostle Paul had powerful reasons for thinking it "far better to depart and to be with Christ," than to remain in this world; there were reasons peculiar to the special circumstances of his own time, and his own personal condition, and there were, and are reasons founded on principles and facts universally applicable,—these I can only sketch in mere outline. The times of Paul were troubled times. It is true that the din

of war had ceased in all the earth, but the master and patron of evil seemed only the more empowered thereby to propel the depravity of mankind in a line of destructive activity against the happiness of our race in the way of individual persecution. What country did the early messengers of the cross enter where insult and violence awaited them not? The practices of Elymas; the blasphemy of the Jews at Antioch, and their expulsion of Saul and Barnabas from a scene of more than common success; the necessity of a flight from Jews and Gentiles at Iconium; the imprisonment at Philippi; the riot at Thessalonica; the tumultuous meeting at Ephesus; Paul's arrest and many sufferings,—these all prove the spirit that was abroad, and show the aspect of the times in which Paul lived. We may suppose, and indeed we must believe, that in the midst of all this it was quite possible to be sustained by the power of the Holy Spirit; but the apostles had the feelings and the peculiarities of men, although they were endued with strength from a Divine source. Had God taken away from them the perception of inconvenience, or so altered their nature as to make that to them no cause of personal pain and suffering, which was uniformly to others an occasion of very acute suffering, the lesson which their life and history were designed

to convey would not have been realized. When persecution in every form of cruelty came upon the apostles they felt it as much as we could. The dungeon was as damp and cheerless, the flags beneath their wearied bodies were as cold and comfortless to them as they would be to us, the chains and stripes were as keenly cutting and oppressive, the hunger was felt as sharply by them as they could be by any ; that sense of wretchedness to which we are liable when our arguments, and our examples, and our labours of every kind, seem to have no effect, they were permitted to feel, and they did feel. The aid of the Holy Ghost was such as to take away no part of their sensibility to these things,—to lessen none of the pain or mortification arising from them ; but while they were allowed to have their full range of effect in assailing every feeling, the apostles were endued with sufficient resolution to endure them without murmuring, to persevere even with the prospect of an increase of them, and to hold themselves at once pure and consistent under the pressure of a load that had weight sufficient to crush common humanity. In the midst of all this the apostle had the most exalted views of what is before the Christian when he is to be admitted into the glorious presence of his God for eternity. His vision of the third heaven enlarged the previous

knowledge which the common stock of inspiration bestowed upon the apostles had in all probability imparted to him upon this subject. In that vision he beheld in heaven things that were unspeakable: whether it is that he dare not, or whether it is that he could not, describe them, we cannot certainly determine; but whatever those words which he heard, or the scenes to which they referred, might be, it is clear from the accounts of this vision that it gave Paul enraptured views of heavenly felicity. When we add to this that deep interest which he took in the progress of the Church on earth, his prayers for all the saints, his letters to the numerous bodies of converts, his unremitting anxiety that all he could offer in the way of service, his life, his heart, his head, his hands, might be unintermittingly employed to multiply the followers of Jesus, and to raise the banners of salvation in every clime,—when all this is taken into consideration, we may suppose how Paul would feel at the thought of being present in heaven, to see the ingathering one by one of those whose pilgrimage was ended, to enjoy the felicities that he had been permitted to glance at, so unspeakable and so elating; and to be set free from the more than usual burden of the flesh which he must have felt who, when he made an allusion to the extent of his sufferings,

said, "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus." These are reasons peculiar to Paul for having "a desire to depart and to be with Christ," which he deemed far better; but there were others which are universally applicable. The Christian's love he eminently exemplified,—it is a high stimulant to create a desire to be translated to heaven. If I really contemplate God as an object of my affections, I will certainly desire his presence in the most consoling and delighting manner in which he can possibly be present with me; this anticipation of being with God is sometimes alluded to in the Scriptures. "Whom have I in heaven but thee," says the Psalmist, "and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee." If I love my fellow-man I can wish for no blessing for him beyond that of his being received into the mansion of the redeemed, nor can I imagine any evidence of my love for him of a higher character than that which could be afforded only in heaven, the welcome I could give him there, the joy at least with which I would see him there, and the fervour with which I would re-echo his praises of the Almighty there; so that love in its widest and best sense—love to our heavenly Father, and love to his saints on earth, is one great reason why I should "desire to depart and to be with Christ," and feel it to be far better.



Gratitude is another reason for the same. It is easy to think of all the attributes of the Deity which are incessantly engaged for man's good, and so to find a grand and unanswerable argument that we are bound to be grateful, but to draw out the several parts of this demonstration into their full dimensions, by gathering up a minute account of the movements of his gracious mind as they every moment act upon us for our good, would be as impossible for finite beings as to comprehend the supreme Lord of heaven and earth himself. Now this view of the amount of gratitude which we owe to God for blessings and mercies without number, seems to present a twofold reason why there should be a "desire to depart and to be with Christ." It produces an anxiety to know the degree to which the agency of God's benevolence has been extended to us, and it leads to a wish to have it in our power to exercise that real gratitude for which we can be only qualified, by the change in our faculties consequent upon our admission into the heavenly mansions. As to the former I may observe, that the exercise of our curiosity is not always safe, for it might lead us into the very depths of profaneness, or it might raise us to the possession of exalted spiritual knowledge. It might tempt us to displease God, by leading us

beyond the bounds which he has assigned to it, but it will be sure to please him when exercised consistently with his Divine precepts on other subjects, and with that reverence and godly fear which becomes us. Amongst all the subjects of investigation which could be proposed to us after our minds have long been satisfied with a knowledge of the great elementary and practical truths of religion, I do not know of any connected with the providential dealings of God towards us, more likely to engage our thoughts and excite our feelings, than a wish to know the extent to which the special goodness of God has been exercised towards us. If we have again and again pondered with wondering delight upon the wide array of mercies which are exhibited in our creation and preservation, and all the blessings of time; if we have, with more than common thankfulness, surveyed the love inestimable that made us freemen in the truest sense—the freest of the free,—that spared not the beloved Son; that refused not to drink to the very dregs the phial of wrath; the love that procured for us such a rich supply of grace as that which is ours, what can be more capable of giving us real satisfaction, than the power of tracing every temporal and spiritual bestowment in its rise, progress, and consequences,

as it came to ourselves? "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee," is a declaration of God, which had a public and general signification, but it is true also, in the most restricted sense in which it can be applied. It is as true of every Israelite, indeed, as it is of the whole Israel of God; but volumes would not suffice to trace it out; it would perhaps be too much for any one to know, or to bear, if opened out to him, with his present powers, but I can well imagine the existence of an appetite for this knowledge, and it is not difficult to perceive how the growth of that appetite would urge on a desire "to depart and to be with Christ," which would be deemed far better, if only for this one reason, that it would afford the means of indulging the appetite.

Besides, a sense of what we owe to God creates a willingness to show a proportionate gratitude to him for all that he has done for us. Ingratitude to God or man is the indication of a bad heart. There are two significations in which we may speak of a bad heart; there is the general acceptance of it drawn from the doctrine of man's corruption; and in this sense we are all bad, and we are all ungrateful. The ingratitude of a life of carelessness and rebellion against God, unhappy and deplorable as it is, is often combined, however, with a strong conviction that God has high

demands upon our gratitude, and frequently we find this sincerely acknowledged by very grievous sinners ; but the ingratitude that marks a man as despising both a Divine and human benefactor, by refusing to acknowledge, in any way, that he has cause to be grateful, evinces badness of heart in its worst aspect. Now, in as far as I am impressed with a sense of the Almighty beneficence having been extended to me personally, I will be impelled to entertain a deep and earnest anxiety respecting the debt of gratitude which I have thus incurred ; the more I am permitted to know of God and of myself, the more will I feel convinced that it would be wholly impossible to pay this debt here ; indeed, the debt can never be paid ; no gratitude ascending now from all the saints who dwell upon the earth ; no strains of thanksgiving, or devotion of services, from all who are to compose the heavenly inhabitants dwelling before the face of God in heaven along with the angelic host, could repay the expenditure of one single drop of blood that trickled to the earth from Immanuel's temples in Gethsemane, or stained the accursed tree upon Mount Calvary. The payment of the debt is hopeless ; the greatest payment we can make, when rated at its true value, is but a faint acknowledgment, whether in words or deeds, of the

amount of what we owe. Great it may seem to some, and truly great it will be in heaven, compared with what it is on earth; but after all it can be but the merest insignificance in the sight of the Infinite Jehovah. Still, as in the life to come we shall know the full extent of the debt; the heart that now throbs with the emotion of whatever of gratitude it can offer in our present state, will then expand into that fulness of this feeling which will be suitable to a glorified saint, and do the utmost degree of honour to our gracious God; it is in this way that I conceive gratitude to be one of the reasons why we should have this desire.

The nature of society in heaven may also be another. We are all made by nature with wants which can have no supply, talents which can have no exercise, tastes that can have no gratification, hopes that can have no fulfilment, and apprehensions not to be allayed, except in a social state, and yet, animally and intellectually, we are so imperfect, as to meet with much to disappoint us in this; so imperfect is our animal nature, that the very cravings of that appetite which tells us that we must provide for the sustaining of life, call upon us so imperiously, that it seems one of the very few points on which there is unanimity, that we can have no satisfactory scene of social

pleasure, without eating and drinking; and although the association of ideas and the force of habit may at first sight prevent this from appearing an objection, when the mind gives itself full play, and thoroughly reflects upon the matter, this will be deemed one of the disadvantages of human society, not only from the abuses to which it gives occasion in the way of excess, but from its interference with the intellectual ends of society. It is the intellectual character of man that gives the true pleasure and advantage to social intercourse; but this also is partaker of the common lot — we are intellectually imperfect, partly from the depravity of our nature, and partly, perhaps, from our various circumstances of rank, education, and prejudice. By experience, knowledge of the world, and knowledge of books, we discover an almost endless series of causes why differences of opinion on almost every subject should exist; the clash of conflicting principles, and the unreasonable and unkind contending for peculiar opinions, are more or less productive of much that is to be lamented, and much that we must consequently mourn over in society. Besides all this, the infirmity of human temper in other respects, and the existence of the various passions which are too frequently allowed a license of unjustifiable extent, contribute towards the amount of those

disadvantages. Nor can I omit to notice, that for many reasons we are unable to enjoy society here except in a very partial way. We may say there is no grand central society in the world accessible to all; the very nature of our animal existence, the distance of countries and localities, and all the minor reasons arising out of these, at once show the impossibility of it. We have little circles in different communities, and at best we can only have in the brightest and the largest of them a few of those who in our own day have contributed to the stores of knowledge, or rendered themselves illustrious by its acquisition and exercise; these are but little images and sprinklings of society, but the splendour and magnificence of that society which shall exist in heaven surpasses the scope of man's present conception. In heaven no imperfection of our nature, no appetite of flesh and blood, no intellectual fault, no infirmity of temper, no variety of condition, no jarring interests, can mar the social scene, and there, in one mighty but unconfused assemblage of those who were the excellent of the earth, will be blended together in the purest harmony, in the most perfect love, in the freest intercourse, men of all kindreds and tongues and people, men of every grade and condition of life, without one breath of discontent to ruffle its quiescent surface. The

expectation of this alone is sufficient to excite within our breasts a desire to depart and to enjoy those scenes of bliss which are so much to be wished for.

There are many other reasons why we may have this desire, but I must content myself with adding one more, and that is, the stability of all that is in heaven. The scenes of the earth are transient as the years that roll away in rapid succession; life is but a breath, the longest life but a span; even wealth is held by an uncertain tenure, and though we never lose it, yet can it never procure for us anything that can be permanently attached to us. Whatever knowledge, station, dignity, or reward, men have here are all the creation of mere circumstances, and soon pass away from the few who have them. And what are friends? sweet and valuable indeed they are, but oh! when time and occasion and experience, have concurred to prove them more to be desired than gold, we must leave them, or they must take their leave of us. And what are the links of kindred, and all the tender ties of family relationship? are they not fragile, quickly broken, quickly gone out of sight? Who has not felt them giving way on every side; who is there that must not in time to come, if in time past it has not been so, experience all the anguish of separation and of loss?



But all these combine to form a powerful impulse, moving us towards the life that is to be hereafter. This instability of everything earthly is contrasted by the immoveable and imperishable nature of everything that is in heaven ; there life is invulnerable, treasures are unfailing, knowledge is perfect and permanent, the crown of reward is incorruptible, the honour is everlasting ; there no casualty can render anything uncertain, no loss of dear objects of affection can make our pleasures tasteless, no affliction can embitter, no malice can prevent our enjoyment ; he that is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever, is the Omnipotent Ruler there, and he imparts his permanence to all that is around him. Thus the stability of heaven and the perfection of its scenes and enjoyments, are reasons for desiring, as Paul did, "to depart and be with Christ, which is far better."

## POSTSCRIPT TO THE READER.

The great truth contended for at the Reformation was "justification," or acquittal from the guilt of sin "by faith only." The principle established at the Council of Trent was "justification," or pardon "by the sacraments only."

A consolidation of these opposite systems, which must draw us nearer to Rome, and make us partakers of her errors, is the aim of the Tractarians,—it is the real and *avowed* object of at least one of the principal writers of the "Tracts for the Times." The author of this work,—should his present plans meet no disappointment,—hopes, in one or two future volumes, further to contribute his humble aid in preparing at least a portion of the popular mind for a rational and scriptural resistance of this awful enterprise. His endeavour will be, with the Divine blessing, so to blend enlargement and illustration of edifying Christian topics with a faithful examination and judgment of the most important of the Tracts, and of other similar publications, specially considered as in some measure to fulfil what his "Introduction" pledges him to, by presenting a FAMILY BOOK for plain Christian people, which he trusts may tend to establish some in the faith, and to preserve those whose views of doctrine are not yet formed, from subtle and insinuating error. In this, his chief desire is to leave on record a full exposition of his faith, for the purpose of commending with renewed and permanent urgency to the valued and beloved congregation to which he ministers, those inestimable truths which he has ever preached to them, as well as to all others committed to him; his advocacy of which in former years, in the principal communities of the United Church, when Clerical Secretary to the Kildare Place Society, secured for him the favourable opinion, the friendship, and the correspondence, of a large number of the leading friends of pure Christianity in the empire; and should any degree of acceptance attend the book elsewhere, or stir up others better qualified to enter upon this most important duty of writing faithfully and unaffectedly for the Christian families of the land generally, his gratitude to the Giver of all good will be great; his labour, and all the anxieties inseparable from it, will be more than amply repaid.

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## ERRATA.

- Page 13, line 5 from the bottom, *for* "demand," *read* "require."  
 42, note, *for* "author's," *read* "author."  
 60 and 61, *for* "inculcated," *read* "calculated."  
 77, line 2, *for* "has," *read* "was."  
 84, put inverted commas to the words "spiritual" and "heavenly," and to the words beginning "spiritual working," and ending "into error."  
 89, line 16, *for* "every tenet," *read* "every Protestant tenet."  
 89, line 19, *for* "(are not —," *read* "are not —(""  
 95, line 4, *for* "more freely," *read* "more fully."  
 116, line 11, *for* "can," *read* "could."  
 125, last line, *for* "mskea," *read* "makes."  
 141, line 10 from the bottom, *for* "hopelessly without it," *read* "hopelessly without."  
 153, line 11, *for* "excursion," *read* "excursions."  
 159, line 2, *for* "like all," *read* "as in all."  
 168, line 16, *for* the period after the word "acceptance" put a comma.  
 189, line 9, *for* "texts," *read* "tests."  
 196, line 3 from the bottom, *for* "critics," *read* "writings."  
 200, line 7 from the bottom, *for* "laws and maxims," *read* "forms and maxims."

